Stothard del. Grignion sculp.

Printed for John Bell British Library Dec.r 19th. 1782.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of ſonges glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fullfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maiſter CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe ſchulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-ſterre----
That made firſt to dyſtylle and rayne
The gold dewe dropys of ſpeche and eloqhence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of Engliſh tong is dede----
My mayſter CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Univerſel fadir in ſcience----
This londis verray treſour and richeſſe----
The firſte fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere ſtrand, and rois riall,
Of freſche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raiſe in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The freſche enamilit termes celeſtiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terreſtriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

VOL. VIII.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

BRITISH
MUSEUM

THE POETICAL WORKS OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. VIII.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE,
TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale ſain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath ſayd hem in ſwiche Engliſh as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not ſayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath ſayd hem in another----
Who ſo that wol his large Volume ſeke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of Engliſh undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whoſe gentle ſpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilſt he lived was the ſoveraigne head
Of ſhepherds all-------- SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ſtar,
To us diſcovers day from far;
His light thoſe miſts and clouds diſſolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he deſcending to the ſhades
Darkneſs again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times-------
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

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THE ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE.

And whilom of this unite
Spake Tullius in a dite,
A man ſhould makin his requeſt
Unto his frende that is honeſt,
And he godely ſhould it fulfill,
But it the more were out of ſkill,
And otherwiſe not graunt therto,
Except only in cauſis two.
Yf men his frende to dethe would drive
Let him be beſy to' ſave his live.
Alſo if men wollen him aſſaile,
Of his worſhip to make him faile,
And hindrin him of his renoun,
Let him with ful entencioun
His devir done in eche degre,
That his frendè ne ſhamid be.
In theſe two caſis with his might,
Taking no kepe to ſkill nor right,
As ferre as love may him excuſe,
This ought no man for to refuſe.
This love that I have tolde to the
Is nothing contrarie to me;
This wol I that thou folowe wele,
And leve the t'othir every dele;

This love to vertue al entendeth,
The t'othir folis blent and ſhendeth.
An othir love alſo there is
That is contrary unto this,
Which deſire is ſo conſtrainid
That it ne is but will fainid;
Away fro trouth it doth ſo varie
That to gode love it is contrarie,
For it maymith in many wiſe
Sikè hertis with covetiſe;
All in winning and in profite
Suche love yſettith his delite:
This love ſo hangith in balaunce,
That if it leſe his hope parchaunce
Of lucre that he' is ſet upon
It woll failin and quenche anon,
For no man maie be amorous,
Ne in his living vertuous,
But if he lovin more in mode
Men for 'hem ſelfe than for ther gode;
For love that profite doth abide
Is falſe, and bidith not no tide:
Soche love comith of Dame Fortune,
That litil while woll contune,
For it ſhall chaungin wondir ſone,
And take eclips as doth the mone,
Whan that ſhe is from us ylet
Through erth, that betwixtin is ſet

The ſonne and her, as it may fall,
Be it in partie or in all:
The ſhadowe makith her bemes merke,
And her hornis to ſhewin derke
That part where ſhe hath loſt her light
Of Phebus fully and the ſight,
Till whan the ſhadowe' is ovir paſte
She' is enlumined agein as faſte
Through the brightnes of the ſonne bemes,
That yevith to' her againe her lemes:
That love is right of ſuche nature,
Now is it faire and now obſcure,
Now bright, now clipſy of manere,
And whilom dimme and whilom clere,
As ſone as poverte ginnith take,
With mantil and with wedis blake
Hidith of love the light away,
That into night it tournith day,
It may not ſein Richeſſe ſhine
Till that the blacke ſhadowis fine,
For whan that Richeſſe ſhinith bright
Love recovereth ayen his light,
And whan it failith he wol flit,
And as ſhe greveth ſo grevith it.
Of this love herith what I ſaie:
The riche men are ylovid aie,
And namely tho that ſparande bene,
That wol not waſhe ther hertis clene

Of the filthe nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning avarice.
The riche man ful fonde is i-wis
That wenith that he lovid is;
If that his hert it underſtode
It is not he; it is his gode:
He may wel wetin in his thought
His gode is loved and he right nought;
For if he be a nigarde eke
Men wol not ſet by him a leke,
But hatin him, this is the ſothe.
Lo what profite his catil dothe!
Of every man that may him ſe
It getteth him nought but enmite,
But he amende him of that vice,
And know himſelfe he is not wiſe.
Certis he ſhould aie frendly be
To get him love, alſo ben fre,
Or els he is not wiſe ne ſage,
No more than is a gote ramage.
That he not lovith his dede proveth,
Whan he his richeſſe ſo well loveth
That he wol hide it aie and ſpare,
His porè frendis ſene forfare,
To kepin aie his ill purpoſe,
Till that for drede his eyin cloſe,
And til a wickid deth him take
Him had levir a ſondre ſhake,

And let al' his limmes a ſondre rive,
Than leve his richeſſe in his live;
He thinketh to part it with no man;
Certain no love is in him than,
For how ſhould love within him be
Whan in his hert is no pite?
That he treſpaſith well I wate,
For eche man knowith his eſtate,
For wel him ought to be reproved
That lovith nought ne is not loved.
But ſithe we arne to Fortune comen,
And hath our ſermon of her nomen,
A wondir will I tell the now,
Thou herdiſt nere ſuche one I trow;
I n'ot where thou me levin ſhall,
Although ſothfaſteneſſe it be all,
As it is writtin, and is ſothe,
That unto men more profite dothe
The frowarde fortune and contraire
Than doth the ſote and debonaire;
And if the thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument provable,
For Fortune debonaire and ſofte
Yfalſith and begilith ofte,
For liche a mothir ſhe can cheriſhe,
And milkin as dothe a norice,
And of her gode to him ydeles,
And yeveth 'hem parte of her joweles,

With grete richis and dignite,
And 'hem ſhe hoteth ſtabilite
In a ſtate that is nothing ſtable,
But chaunging aie and variable,
And fedith 'hem with glory veine,
And worldely bliſſe nothing certeine:
Whan ſhe 'hem ſettith on her whele
Than wenin thei to be right wele,
And in ſo ſtable ſtate withall
That nevir thei wene for to fall;
And whan thei ſette ſo high to be
Thei wene to have in certainte
Of hertly frendis to grete nombre,
That nothing might ther ſtate encombre;
Thei truſt 'hem ſo on every ſide,
Wening with 'hem thei would abide
In every perill and miſchaunce
Withoutin chaunce or variaunce
Bothè of catil and of gode,
And alſo for to ſpende ther blode,
And al ther membris for to ſpill,
Onily to fulfill ther will:
Thei maken it whole in many wiſe,
And hotin 'hem ther full ſervice,
How ſore ſo that it do 'hem ſmerte
Into ther very nakid ſherte;
Herte and hande alſo whole thei give,
For all the time that thei may live,

So that with this ther flatiry
Thei makin folis glorifie
Onely of ther wordis ſpeking,
And han chere of a rejoyſing,
And trow 'hem as the Evangile;
And it is al falſhede and gile,
As thei ſhal afterwardis ſe;
Whan thei arne fal in poverte,
And ben of gode and catil bare,
Than ſhould thei ſene who frendis ware,
For of an hundrid certainly,
Nor of a thouſande ful ſcarſly,
Ne ſhall thei finde unnethis one
Whan poverte is comen upon.
For thus Fortune that I of tell,
With men whan that her luſt to dwell,
Maketh 'hem to leſe ther coniſaunce,
And noriſheth 'hem in ignoraunce.
But frowarde Fortune and perverſe,
Whan high eſtates ſhe doth reverſe,
And makith 'hem to toumble doune
Of her whele with a ſodaine tourne,
And from ther richeſſe dothe 'hem fle,
And plongith 'hem in poverte,
As a ſtepmothir envious,
And laieth a plaiſtir dolorous
Unto ther hertis woundid egre,
Whiche is not tempered with vinegre,

But with poverte' and indigence,
For to ſhewe by experience
That ſhe is Fortune verilie,
In whom no man ne ſhould affie,
Nor in her yeftis have fiaunce,
She is ſo ful of variaunce.

Thus can ſhe makin hie and lowe,
Whan thei from richeſſe arnè throwe,
Fully to knowin without were
Frende of affecte and frende of chere,
And whiche in love weren trew and ſtable,
And whiche alſo weren variable,
Aftir Fortunè ther goddeſſe,
In poverte', eithir in richeſſe,
For all that yeveth here out of drede
Unhappe yberith it in dede,
For Infortunè lette not one
Of frendis whan Fortune is gone,
I mene tho frendis that woll fle
Anone as entrith poverte;
And yet thei wol not leve 'hem ſo,
But in eche place where that thei go
Thei callin 'hem wretche, ſcorne, and blame,
And of ther miſhappe 'hem diffame,
And namely ſuche as in richeſſe
Pretendith moſte of ſtableneſſe,
Whan that they ſawe 'hem ſet on lofte,
And werin of 'hem ſucoured ofte,

And moſte iholpe in all ther nede,
But now thei take no manir hede,
But ſeine in voice of flatirie
That now appereth ther folie
Ovir al wher ſo that thei fare,
And ſinge, Go, farewel, Feldefare.
Allè ſuche frendis I beſhrewe,
For of trewe frendes there be to fewe,
But ſothfaſt frendes, what ſo betide,
In every fortune wollen abide;
Thei han ther hertes in ſuche nobleſſe
That thei n'il love for no richeſſe,
Nor for that Fortune may 'hem ſende
Thei wollen 'hem ſocour and defende,
And chaungin for ſofte ne for ſore;
For who his frende loveth evirmore,
Though men drawe ſwerdis him to ſlo,
Thei may not hewe ther love a two;
But if in caſe that I ſhall ſay,
For pride and ire leſe it he may,
And for reprove by nicete,
And diſcovering of privite
With tongè wounding, as felon,
Through venemous detraccion.
Frende in this caſe wol gon his way,
For nothing greve him more ne may,
And for nought ellis wol he fle
If he love in ſtabilite;

And certaine he is well begone
Among a thouſande that findeth one,
For there ne may be no richeſſe
Ayenſt frendſhip of worthineſſe,
For it ne may ſo high attaine
As may the valoure, ſothe to ſaine,
Of him that lovith trewe and well:
Frendſhip is more than is catell,
For frende in courte aie bettir is
Than peny is in purſe certis,
And than is Fortune miſhaping,
Whan upon men ſhe is fabling
Thorough miſturning of her chaunce,
And caſtith 'hem out of balaunce.
She maketh through her adverſite
Men ful and clerly for to ſe
Him that is frende in exiſtence
From him that is by apparence,
For infortune makith anone
To know thy frendis fro thy fone
By experience right as it is,
The whiche is more to praiſe i-wis
Than in muche richeſſe and treſour,
For more depe profite and valour
Poverte', and ſuche adverſite
Before, than doeth proſperite,
For that one yevith conisaunce,
And t'othir gevith ignoraunce.

And thus in poverte' is in dede
Trouthè declarid fro falſhede,
For faint frendis it wol declare,
And trewe alſo, what way they fare;
For whan he was in his richeſſe
Theſe frendis ful of doubleneſſe
Offirid him in many wiſe
Ther herte and body, and ſervice,
What would he then have you to' have bought
To knowin opinly ther thought,
That he now hath ſo clerely ſene?
The laſſe begiled he ſhould have bene
And he had than percevid it,
But Richeſſe n'olde not let him wit;
Wel more avauntage doeth him than,
Sithe that it maketh him a wiſe man,
The great miſchefe that he perceveth
Than doeth richeſſe, that him deceveth;
Richeſſe riche ne ymakith nought
Him that on treſour ſette his thought,
For richeſſe ſtonte in ſuffiſaunce,
And nothing ſtonte in haboundaunce,
For ſuffiſaunce all onily
Makith menne to live richily.

For he that hath but mitchis tweine,
Ne value in his whole demeine,

Liveth more at eſe, and more is riche,
Than doith he whiche that is chiche,
And in his barne hath, ſoth to ſaine,
An hundrid mavis of whete graine,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And have of golde many beſaunt,
For in the getting he' hath ſuche wo,
And in the keping drede alſo,
And ſette ere more his beſineſſe
For to encreſe and nat to leſſe,
For to augment and multiply;
And though on hepes that lie him by,
Yet nevir ſhall make his richeſſe
Aſſeth unto his gredineſſe;
But the pore man that retchith nought
Save of his livelode in his thought,
Whiche that he getteth with his travaile,
He dredith nought that it ſhall faile,
Though he have little world'is gode,
Metè and drinke, and eſie fode,
Upon his travaile and living,
And alſo ſuffiſaunt clothing,
Or if in ſickeneſſe that he fall,
And lothè mete and drinke withall,
Though he have not his mete to buie,
He ſhall bethinke him haſtily
To put him out of all daungere,
That he of mete hath no miſtere,

Or that he maie with little eke
Be foundin while that he is seke,
Or that men shall him berne in haste
To live till his sickenesse be paste
Unto some maisondewe beside:
He caste nought what shall him betide;
He thinkith nought that evre he shall
Into any sickenesse yfall.

And though it fall, as it maie be,
That all betime sparin shall he
As mokill as shall to' him suffice
While he is sicke in any wise,
He doith for that he woll be
Contentid with his poverte
Withoutin nede of any man:
So moche in little have he can
He is apaide with his fortune,
And for he n'ill be importune
Unto no wight ne onerous,
Nor of ther godesse covetous,
Therefore he spareth, it maie well ben,
His poru estate for to sustene.

Or if him luste not for to spare,
But suffrith forthe as nat yet ware,
At laste it happeneth, as it maie,
All right unto his laste daie,

And take the worlde as it would be;
For evir in herte thinkith he
The ſonir that Deth him yſlo
To paradiſe the ſonir go
He ſhall, there for to live in bliſſe
Where that he ſhall no godis miſſe:
Thidir he hopeth God ſhall him ſende
Aftir this wretchid liv'is ende.
Pythagoras himſelf reherſes,
In a boke that The Goldin Verſes
Is cleped, for the nobilite
Of the honorable dite,
Than whan thou goeſt thy body fro
Fre in the ayre thou ſhalt up go,
And levin all humanite,
And purely live in diete.
He is a fole withoutin were
That trowith have his countrey here.
In yerth is not our countere,
That maie theſe clerkis ſeine and ſe
In Boece of Conſolacion,
Where it is makid mencion
Of our contre plaine at the eye
By teching of philoſophie,
Where leude men mightin lerin wit,
Who ſo that would tranſlatin it.
If he be ſuche that can well live
Aftir his rentè maie him yeve,

And not desirith more to have
Than maie fro poverte him save.
A wiseman saied, as we maie sene,
Is no man wretched but he it wene,
Be he a king, knight, or ribaude:
Many' a ribaude is merie' and baude
That swinketh and berith daie and night
Many a burthin of grete might,
The whiche doith him lasse offence
For that he suffrith in pacience:
Thei laugh and daunce, thei trippe and sing,
And laie nought up for ther living,
But in the taverne all dispendeth
The winning whiche that God'hem sendeth;
Than goeth he fardils for to bere
With as gode chere as he did ere:
To swinke and travaile' he not fainith,
For to robbin he disdainith,
But right anon after his swinke
He goeth to taverne for to drinke.
All these are riche in haboundaunce
That can thus havin suffisaunce
Well more than can an usurere,
As God well knowith, without were,
For 'an usurere, so God me se,
Shall nevir for richesse riche be,
But er more pore and indigent,
Scarce, and gredy in his entent.

For ſothe it is, whom it diſpleſe,
There maie no marchaunt live at eſe,
His herte in ſoche a where is ſet
That it quicke brennith for to get,
Ne nevir ſhall though he hath getten,
Though he have golde in garnirs yeten,
For to be nedy he dredeth ſore,
Wherefore to gettin more and more
He ſet his herte and his deſire:
So hote he brennith in the fire
Of covetiſe, that maketh him wode
To purchace othir mennis gode.
He undirfongith a grete pain
That undertaketh to drinke up Sain,
For the more that he drinkith aie
The more he levith, ſothe to ſaie.
Thus is the thruſt of falſe getting,
That laſte evir in coviting,
And the anguiſhe and the diſtreſſe,
With the firè of gredineſſe;
She fightith with him aie and ſtriveth,
So that his herte a ſondir riveth:
Soche gredineſſe him aſſailith
That whan' he moſte hath moſte he failith.
Phiſiciens and advocates
Goin right by the famè yates;
Thei ſell ther ſcience for winning,
And haunte ther craſte for grete getting:

Ther winning is of ſoche ſweteneſſe
That if a man fall in ſickeneſſe
Thei are full glad for ther encrece,
For by ther will withoutin leſe
Evèriche man ſhouldin be ſeke;
Though thei die thei ſet not a leke;
Aftir whan thei the golde have take
Full little care for 'hem thei make:
Thei would fowertie were ſicke at ones,
Ye, two hundrid, in fleſhe and bones,
And yet two thouſande, as I geſſe,
For to encreſin ther richeſſe.
Thei woll not worchin in no wiſe
But for lucre and covetiſe,
For phiſicke ginnith firſt by (phi)
The phiſicien alſo ſothly;
And ſithen it goeth fro ſie to ſie
To truſt on 'hem it is folie,
For thei n'ill in no manir gre
Doin right nought for charite.
Eke in the ſamè ſecte are ſet
All tho that prechin for to get
Worſhips, and honour, and richeſſe;
Ther hertis arne in grete diſtreſſe
That folke livin not holily,
But abovin all ſpecially
Soche as yprechin veinglorie,
And towarde God have no mem'orie,

But forthe as ipocritis trace,
And to ther ſoulis deth purchace,
And outward ſhewing holineſſe,
Though thei be full of curſidneſſe:
Nat liche to the apoſtlis twelve,
Thei deceve othir and 'hem ſelve:
Begilid is the gilir than
For preching of a curſid man:
Though it to othir maie profite
Himſelf it availeth not a mite,
For oft gode predicacioun
Cometh of evill entencioun:
To him nat availith his preching,
All helpe he othir with his teching,
For where thei gode example take
There is he with veinglorie ſhake.
But let us levin theſe prechours,
And ſpeke of 'hem that in ther tours
Hepe up ther golde and faſt yſhet,
And ſore thereon ther hertis ſet:
Thei neithir lovin God ne drede;
Thei kepin more than it is nede,
And in ther baggis ſore it binde
Out of the ſunne and of the winde;
Thei puttin up more than nede ware
Whan thei ſene povir folk forfare,
For hungre die, and for cold quake;
God can well vengeaunce thereof take;

The grete miſchivis 'hem aſſaileth,
And thus in gadring aie travaileth;
With mochil pain thei winne richeſſe,
And drede 'hem holdith in diſtreſſe
To kepin that thei gathir faſt:
With ſorowe thei leve it at laſt,
With ſorowe thei bothe die and live
That unto richeſſe ther hertes yeve.
And in defaute of love it is,
As it ſhewith full well iwis,
For if theſe gredy, ſothe to ſaine,
Lovidin and were loved againe,
And gode love reignid ovir all,
Soche wickidneſſe ne ſhould yfall,
But he ſhould yeve that moſte gode had
To 'hem that weren in nede beſtad,
And live withoutin falſe uſure,
For charite full clene and pure;
If thei 'hem yeve unto godeneſſe,
Defending 'hem from idilneſſe,
In all this worlde than povir none
We ſhouldin finde I trowe not one.
But chaungid is this worlde unſtable,
For love is ovir all vendable:
We ſe that no man lovith now
But for his winning and for prowe;
And love is thrallid in ſervage
Whan it is ſolde for avauntage;

Yet women woll ther bodies ſell:
Soche ſoules goith to the devill of hell.
Whan Love had tolde 'hem his entent
The baronage to counſaile went.
In many ſentencis thei fill,
And diverſly thei ſaied ther will;
But aftir diſcorde thei accorded,
And ther accorde to Love recorded:
Sir, ſaidin thei, we ben at one,
By even accorde of everichone,
Out take Richeſſe all onily,
That ſwornè hath full hauteinly
That ſhe the caſtill n'ill aſſaile,
Ne ſmite a ſtroke in this battaile
With darte ne mace, ne ſpere ne knife,
For man that ſpeketh or berith life,
And blamith your empriſe iwis,
And from our hoſte departid is,
At leſtè waie, as in this plite,
So hath ſhe this man in diſpite;
For ſhe ſaieth he ne loved her never,
And therefore ſhe woll hate him ever;
For he woll gathir no treſore
He hath her wrathe for evirmore;
He' agilte her nere in othir caſe,
Lo here all wholly his treſpaſe!
She ſaieth well that this othir daie
He aſked her leve to gone the waie

That is clepid to moche yeving,
And ſpake full faire in his praying,
But whan he praied her poore was he,
Therefore ſhe warned him the entre,
Ne yet is he not thrivin ſo
That he hath getten a penie or two
That quietly' is his owne in holde:
Thus hath Richeſſe us all ytolde,
And whan Richeſſe us this recorded
Withoutin her we ben acorded.

And we finde in our accordaunce
That Falſe Semblant and Abſtinaunce,
With all the folke of ther battaile,
Shull at the hindir gate aſſaile
That Wickid Tong hath in keping,
With his Normans full of jangling,
And with 'hem Curteſie and Largeſſe,
That ſhullin ſhewe ther hardineſſe
To the old wife that kept ſo hard
Faire Welcoming within her ward,
Than ſhall Delite and Well-Heling
Yfondin Shame adoun to bring
With all her hoſte erly and late,
Thei ſhull aſſailin that ilke gate;
Ayeniſt Drede ſhall Hardineſſe
Aſſaile and alſo Sikirneſſe,
With all the folke of ther leding,
That nevir wiſte what was ſlaying.

Fraunchiſe ſhall fight and eke Pite
With Daungir full of cruilte,
Thus is your hoſte ordainid wele;
Doune ſhall the caſtill every dele
If everiche doe his entent,
So that Venus ybe preſent,
Your mothir, full of veſſelage,
That can inough of ſoche uſage;
Withoutin her maie no wight ſpede
This werke neithir for worde ne dede,
Therefore is gode ye for her ſende,
For through her maie this worke amende.

Lordinges, my mothir the goddes,
That is my ladie and maiſtres,
Ne is nat all at my willing,
Ne doeth nat all my deſiring;
Yet can ſhe ſometime doen labour
Whan that her luſte in my ſocour,
As my nede is for to atcheve,
But now I thinke her nat to greve:
My mothir is ſhe', and of childhede
I both worſhip her and eke drede,
For who that dredith ſire ne dame
Shall it abie in bodie' or name:
And nathèleſſe yet connè we
Sende aſtir her if nede ybe,

And were ſhe nigh ſhe commin wold;
I trowe that nothing might her hold.
My mothir is of grete proweſſe,
She hath tane many a fortreſſe
That coſt hath many a pound er this
There I n'as not preſent iwis,
And yet men ſaied it was my dede:
But I come nevir in that ſtede,
Ne me ne liketh, ſo mote I the,
That ſoche tours ben ytake with me;
For why? me thinketh that in no wife
It maie be cleped but Marchaundiſe.

Go buie a courſir blacke or white,
And paie therefore, than art thou quite:
The marchaunt owith the right nought
Ne thou him whan thou haſt it bought.
I woll not ſelling clepe Yeving,
For ſelling aſketh no guerdoning;
Here lithe no thanke ne no merite,
That one goth from that othre' all quite;
But this ſelling is not ſemblable;
For whan his horſe is in the ſtable
He maie it ſell again parde,
And winnen on it, ſoche happe maie be,
All maie the manne nat leſe iwis,
For at the leſt the ſkinne is his;

Or ellis, if it ſo betide
That he woll kepe his horſe to ride,
Yet is he lorde aie of his horſe;
But thilkè chafare is well worſe
There Venus entrimet ith ought,
For who ſo ſoche chaffare hath bought
He ſhall not worchin ſo wiſely
That he ne ſhall leſe uttirly
Bothe his money and his chaffare;
But the ſellir of thilkè ware
The priſe and profite havin ſhall;
Certaine the buier ſhall leſe all,
For he ne can ſo dere it buie
To have lordſhip and full maiſtrie,
Ne havin power to make letting,
Neither for yefte ne for preching,
That of his chaffare maugrè his
Another ſhall have as moche iwis,
If he woll yeve as moche as he,
Of what countrey ſo that he be,
Or for right nought, ſo happe ymaie,
If he can flattir her to' her paie.
And ben thair ſoche marchauntis wiſe?
No, but folis in every wiſe:
Whan thei buie ſoche thing wilfully
There thei leſe ther gode folily;
But nathèleſſe this dare I ſaie,
My mothir is not wont to paie,

For ſhe' is neithir ſo fole ne nice
To entremete her of ſoche vice;
But truſtith well he ſhall paie all
That repente of his bargaine ſhall,
Whan Poverte' put him in diſtreſſe,
All were he ſcholir to Richeſſe,
That is for me in grete yerning
Whan ſhe aſſenteth to my willing.

But by my mothir Sainct Venus,
And by her fathir Saturnus,
That her engendrid by his life,
But nat upon his weddid wife,
Yet woll I more unto you ſwere,
To makin this thing the ſurere.
Now by that faithe and that beaute
That I owe to' all my brethrin fre,
Of whiche there n'is wight undir heven
That can ther fadir's namis neven,
So divers and many there be
That with my mothre' have be prive,
Yet woll I ſwere for ſikirneſſe
The pole of helle to my witneſſe,
Now drinke I not this yere clarre
If that I lie or forſworne be,
For of the goddes the uſage is
That who ſo him forſwereth amis

Shall that yere drinkin no clarre.
Now have I ſworne inough parde;
If I forſwere than am I lorne,
But I woll nevir be forſworne,
Sithe Richeſſe hath me failid here
She ſhall abie that treſpas dere
At leſtè waie but I her harme
With ſwerde, or ſparth, or with giſarme.
For certis ſithe ſhe loveth not me,
Fro thilkè time that ſhe maie ſe
The caſtill and the toure to ſhake,
In ſorie time ſhe ſhall awake;
If I maie gripe a richè man
I ſhall ſo pulle him if I can
That he ſhall in a few ſtoundis
Leſe all his markes and his poundis.
I ſhall him make his pens out fling
But that thei in his garnir ſpring;
Our maidins ſhall eke plucke him ſo
That him ſhall nedin fethirs mo,
And make him ſell his londe to ſpende
But he the bet conne him defende.

Pore men han made ther lorde of me;
Although thei nat ſo mightie be
That thei maie ſede me in delite
I woll not have 'hem in diſpite:

No gode man hateth 'hem as I geſſe,
For chinche and feloun is Richeſſe,
That ſo can chaſe 'hem and diſpiſe,
And 'hem defoule in ſondrie wiſe:
Thei loven full bette, ſo God me ſpede,
Than doith the riche chinchy grede,
And ben (in gode faith) more ſtable,
And truir and more ſerviable,
And therefore it ſuffiſith me
Ther gode hertis and ther beaute:
Thei han on me ſet all ther thought,
And therefore I foryete 'hem nought.
I woll 'hem bring in grete nobleſſe,
If that I were god of Richeſſe,
As I am god of Love ſothely,
Soche ruthe upon ther plaint have I;
Therefore I muſt his ſuccour be
That painith him to ſervin me,
For if he deied for love of this
Than ſemeth in me no love there is.
Sir, ſaied thei, ſothe is every dele
That ye reherce, and we wote wele
Thilke othe to holde is reſonable,
For it is gode and covenable
That ye on riche men han yſworne;
For, Sir, this wote we well beforne,
If riche men doin you homage
That is as folis doen outrage;

But ye ſhull not forſwórne ybe,
Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie,
Or piment makid freſhe and newe;
Ladies ſhull 'hem ſoche pepir brewe
If that thei fall into ther laas
That thei for wo mowe ſaine Alas!
Ladies ſhullen ere ſo curteis be
That thei ſhall quite your othe all fre;
Ne ſeketh nevir othir vicaire,
For thei ſhall ſpeke with 'hem ſo faire
That ye ſhall holde you paied full wele,
Though ye you medle nere a dele.
Let ladies worchin with ther thinges,
Thei ſhall 'hem tell ſo fele tidinges,
And move ſo many requeſtis,
By flatterie, that not honeſt is,
And thereto yeve 'hem ſoche thankinges,
What with kiſſing and with talkinges,
That certis if thei trowid be
Shall nevir leve 'hem londe ne fe
That it n'ill as the moeble fare,
Of whiche thei firſt delivered are.
Now maie you tell us all your will,
And we your heſtis ſhall fulfill.

But Falſe Semblant dare not for drede
Of you, Sir, medle 'him of this dede,

For he ſaith that ye ben his ſo,
He n'ot if ye woll worche him wo;
Wherefore we praie you all, beau Sire,
That ye foryeve him now your ire,
And that he maie dwell as your man
With Abſtinence his dere lemman:
This our accorde and our will now.

Parfei, ſaied Love, I graunt it you
I woll well holde him for my man;
Now let him come: and he forthe ran.

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) in this wiſe
I take the here to my ſervice,
That thou our frendis helpe alwaie,
And hindre 'hem neithir night ne daie,
But doe thy might 'hem to releve,
And eke our en'emies that thou greve:
Thine be this might; I graunt it the;
My king of Harlotes ſhalt thou be:
We woll that thou have ſoche honour:
Certain thou art a falſe traitour,
And eke a thief; ſithe thou were borne
A thouſande times thou art forſworne:
But nathèleſſe in our hering,
To put our folke out of doubting,
I bidde the teche 'hem, woſt thou how?
By ſome genèrall ſignè now,
In what place thou ſhalt foundin be
If that men had miſtir of the,

And how men ſhall the beſt eſpie,
For the to knowe is grete maiſtrie:
Tell in what place is thine haunting.
Sir, I have fully divers wonning
That I kepe not reherſid be,
So that ye would reſpitin me,
For if that I tell you the ſothe
I maie have harme and ſhamè bothe:
If that my felowes wiſtin it
My talis ſhouldin me be quit,
For certaine thei would hatè me
If er I knewe ther cruelte,
For thei would ore all hold 'hem ſtill
Of trothe that is again ther will:
Soche talis kepin thei not here;
I might eftſone buie it full dere
If I ſaied of 'hem any thing
That diſpleſith to ther hering,
For what worde that 'hem pricketh or biteth
In that worde none of 'hem deliteth,
All were it goſpell the' Evangile,
That would reprove 'hem of ther gile,
For thei are cruill and hautain;
And this thing wote I well certain,
If I ſpeke ought to paire or loos
Your courte ſhall not ſo well be cloos;
That thei ne ſhall wite it at laſt:
Of gode men am I nought agaſt,

For thei woll taken on'hem nothing
Whan that thei knowe all my mening,
But he that woll it on him take
He woll himſelf ſuſpecious make
That he his life let covirtly
In Gile and in Ypocriſie,
That me' engendrid and yave ſoſtring.
Thei made a full gode engendring,
(Quod Love) for who ſo ſothly tell
Thei engendrid the divell of hell.
But nedely, howſoere it be,
(Quod Love) I will and chargè the
To tell anon thy wonning placis
Hering eche wight that in this place is,
And what life thou liviſt alſo,
Hide it no lengir now; whereto?
Thou muſt diſcovre' all thy worching,
How thou ſerviſt, and of what thing,
Though that thou ſhouldeſt for thy ſoth-ſaw
Ben all to-betin and to-drawe,
And yet art thou not wont parde;
But natheleſſe though thou betin be
Thou ſhalt not be the firſt that ſo
Hath for ſothſawe yſuffrid wo.
Sir, ſithe that it maie likin you,
Though that I ſhould be ſlain right now,
I ſhall doen your commaundèment,
For thereto have I grete talent.

Withoutin wordis mo right than
Falſe Semblant his ſermon began,
And ſaied 'hem thus in audience:
Barons, take hede of my ſentence.
That wight that liſt to have knowing
Of Falſe Semblant, full of flatt'ring,
He muſt in worldly folke him ſeke,
And certis in the cloiſtirs eke;
I won no where but in 'hem twaie,
But not like evin, ſothe to ſaie:
Shortly, I woll herberowe me
There I hope beſt to hulſtrid be;
And certainly ſikereſt hiding
Is undirneth humbliſt clothing.
Religious folke ben full covert,
Seculer folke ben more appert;
But nathèleſſe I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne 'hem diffame,
In what habite that er thei go;
Religion humble' and true alſo
Woll I not blamin ne diſpiſe,
But I n'ill love it in no wiſe;
I mene of falſe religious,
That ſtout ben and malicious,
That wollin in an habite go
And ſettin not ther herte therto.

Religious folke ben all pitous,
Thou ſhalt not ſene one diſpitous;

Thei lovin no pride ne no ſtrife,
But humbly thei woll lede ther life;
With whiche folke woll I nevir be,
And if I dwell I fainè me
I maie well in ther habite go;
But me were lever my necke a two
Than let a purpoſe that I take,
What covènaunt that er I make.
I dwell with 'hem that proude ybe,
And full of wiles and ſubtilte,
That worſhip of this worlde coveiten,
And gretè nede connin expleiten,
And gon and gadrin grete pitaunces,
And purchaſe 'hem the acqueintaunces
Of men that mightie life maie leden,
And faine 'hem pore, and 'hem ſelf ſeden
With gode morcils delicious,
And drinkin gode wine precious,
And preche us povert and diſtreſſe,
And fiſhin 'hem ſelf grete richeſſe
With wily nettis that thei caſt:
It woll come foule out at the laſt.
Thei ben fro clene religion went;
Thei make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule concluſion:
I have a robe of religion,
Than am I all religious;
This argument is all roignous;

It is not worth a crokid brere:
Habite ne makith monke ne frere,
But clene life and devocion
Makith gode men of religion.
Nathèleſſe there can none anſwere,
How high that er his hedde he ſhere
With raſour whettid nere ſo kene,
That gile in braunchis cutte thurtene,
There can no wight diſtinct it ſo
That he dare ſaie a word thereto.
But what herb'row that ere I take,
Or what ſemblaunt that er I make,
I mene but gile, and folowe that,
For right no more than Gibbe our cat
(That awaiteth mice and rattes to killen)
Ne entende I but to begilen:
Ne no wight maie by my clothing
Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
Ne by my wordis yet parde,
So ſoft and ſo plefaunt thei be.
Beholde the dedis that I doe,
But thou be blinde thou oughtiſt ſo,
For varie ther wordes fro ther dede
Thei thinke on gile withoutin drede,
What manir clothing that thei were,
Or what eſtate that er thei bere,
Lerid or leude, lorde or ladie,
Knight, ſquier, burgeis, or bailie.

Right thus while Falſe Semblant ſermoneth
Eft ſonis Love him areſoneth,
And brake his tale in his ſpeking
As though he had him tolde leſing,
And ſaid, What devill is that I here?
What folke haſt thou us nempnid here?
Maie men findin religioun
In worldly habitacioun?
Ye, Sir, it foloweth nat that thei
Should lede a wickid life parfei,
Ne not therefore ther ſoulis leſe
That 'hem to worldly clothis cheſe,
For certis it were grete pite;
Men maie in ſeculer clothes ſe
Floriſhin holy religioun
Full many' a ſainct in felde and toun,
With many' a virgine glorious,
Devoute and full religious,
Han died that commin clothe aie beren,
Yet ſainctis nertheleſſe thei weren:
I could reckin you many a ten,
Ye, welnigh all theſe holy women
That men in churchis herry' and ſeke,
Bothe maidins and theſe wivis eke,
That bare ful many' a faire childe here,
Werid alway clothis ſeculere,
And in the ſame clothes didin they
That ſaintis weren and ben alway.

The ix thousande maidinis dere,
That beren in heven ther ciergis clere,
Of whiche men rede in churche and sing,
Were take in seculer clothing,
Whan thei recevid martirdome,
And wonnin heven unto ther home.
Gode hert ymakith the gode thought,
The clothing yeveth ne revith nought:
The gode thought and the gode worching
That maketh the religion flouring;
There lieth the gode religioun
Aftir the righte entencioun.
Who so ytoke a wethir's skinne,
And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinne,
For he should go with lambis white,
Wenist thou not he would hem bite?
Yes; nertheleſſe as he were wode
He would 'hem wirry', and drinke the blode,
And wel the rathir hem disceve,
For sithin thei coude nat perceve
His tregette and his cruilte
Thei would him folow tho he flie.

If there be wolvis of suche hewe
Amongis thuse apostlis newe,
Thou, holy churche, thou maiste be wailed;
Sithe that thy cite is assailed

Through knightis of thine ownè table
God wot thy lordſhip is doutable:
If thei enforcin it to win
That ſhould defend it fro within
Who might defence ayenſt 'hem make?
Withoutin ſtroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell,
Without diſplaying of penſell;
And if God n'il done it ſocour,
But let rennin in this colour,
Thou muſt thy heſtis lettin be;
Than is there nought but yeldè the,
Or yeve 'hem tribute doutileſs,
And holde it of 'hem to have pees:
But gretir harme betidith the
That thei all maiſtir of it be:
Wel con thei ſcornin the withall,
By day yſtuffin thei the wall,
And al the night thei minin there:
Nay, thou plantin muſt ellis where
Thine impis if thou wolt frute have;
Abide not there thy ſelfe to ſave.

But now pece; here I turne againe;
I wol no more of this thing ſaine,
Yf I may paſſin me hereby,
For I might makin you wery;

But I wol hetin you alway
To helpe your frendis what I may,
So thei wollin my company,
For thei be shent all uttirly;
But if so fallin that I be
Oftin with 'hem and thei with me,
And eke my lemman mote thei serve,
Or thei shul not my love deserve.
Forsoth I am a false traitour;
God judged me for a thefe trechour:
Forsworne I am, but welnigh none
Wote of my gile til it be done.
Through me hath many one deth receved
That my treget ner aperceved,
And yet receveth, and shal receve,
That my falsnesse shal nere perceve,
But who so doth, if he wise be,
Him is right gode beware of me;
But so slighe is the perceving
That al to late comith knowing,
For Proteus, that coude him chaunge
In every shappe homely and straunge,
Coude nevir suche gile ne tresoune
As I, for I come nere in toune
There as I might yknowin be
Though men me both might here and see:
Ful wel I can my clothis chaunge,
Take one and make an othir straunge;

Now am I knight, now chaſtèlaine,
Now prelate, and nowe chapèlaine,
Now prieſt, now clerke, and now foſtere,
Now am I maiſtir, now ſcholere,
Now monke, now chanon, now baily:
Whatevir miſtir manne am I.

Now am I prince, now am I page,
And can by hert ev'ry langage;
Somtimis am I hore and olde,
Now I am yong, and ſtout, and bolde,
Now am I Robert, now Robin,
Now Frere Minor, now Jacobin:
And with me foloweth my loteby
To done me ſolace and comp'any,
That hight Dame Abſtinence, and raigned
In many a queint arraie fained;
Right as it commeth to her liking
I fulfill all her deſiring.

Somtime a woman's clothe take I,
Now am I a maide, now lady:

Somtime I am religious,
Now like an ankir in an hous:

Somtime am I a prioreſſe,
And now a nonne, and now abbeſſe,
And go thorough all regiounes
Yſeking all religiounes.

But to what ordir that I am ſworne
I take the ſtrawe and bete the corne:

To jolie folke I enhabite
I aſke no more but ther habite.
What wol ye more? in every wiſe
Right as me liſt I me diſgiſe.
Wel can I bere me undir wede,
Unlike is my worde to my dede.
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The folke through my priv'ilegis all
That ben in Chriſtendome a live.
I may aſſoile and I may ſhrive,
That no prelate may lettin me,
All folke where evir thei found be:
I n'ot no prelate maie done ſo
But it the Pope be, and no mo,
That madin thilke eſtabliſhing:
Now is not this a propre thing?
But were my ſleightis aperceved
. . . . . .
As I was wont, and woſt thou why?
For I did 'hem a tregetry;
But therof yeve I' a litil tale,
I have the ſilvir and the male.
So have I prechid and eke ſhriven,
So have I take, ſo have I yeven,
Through ther foly huſbonde and wife,
That I lede right a joly life:
Through ſimpleſſe of the prelacie
Thei know not all my tregettrie.

But for as moche as man and wife
Shuld shew ther parish prieſt ther life
Onis a yere, as saith the boke,
Er any wight his housil toke,
Than have I privilegis large
That maie of mochil thing discharge,
For he may say right thus parde:
Sir Prieſt, in shrift I tel it the
That he to whom that I am shriven
Hath me assoilid, and me yeven
Penaunce sothly for alle my sin
Whiche that I founde me giltie in;
Ne I ne' have nevir entencion
To make double confession,
Ne reherce efte my shrift to the;
O shrifte is right inough to me;
This ought the to suffisin wele,
Ne be not rebell nere a dele,
For certis though thou haddeſt it sworne
I wote no prieſt ne prelate borne
That maie to shrift eft me constraine,
And if thei done I wol me plaine,
For I wote where to plainin wele:
Thou shalt not streinin me a dele,
Ne enforce me ne not me trouble
To makin my confession double:

Ne I have none affection
To' have double abſolucion;
The firſt is right inough to me;
This lattre' aſſoiling quite I the:
I am unbounde; what maiſt thou finde
More of my ſinnes me to unbinde,
For he that might hath in his honde
Of all my finnis me unbounde?
And if thou wolt me thus conſtraine,
That me mote nedis on the plaine,
There ſhall no juge imperiall,
Ne biſhop ne officiall,
Done jugement on me, for I
Shal gone and plaine me opinly
Anon to my ſhriftfathir newe,
Whiche that hight Frerè Wolfe untrewe,
And he ſhal chuſin him for me,
For I trowe he can hampir the;
But Lord! he would be wrothe withall
Yf men would him Frere Wolfe ycall,
For he would have no pacience,
But done all cruill vengience;
He would his might done at the leſt,
Than nothing ſpare for Godd'is heſt:
And God ſo wiſe be my ſocour
But thou yeve me my Saviour
At Eſtir, whan it likith me,
Withoutin preſing more on the,

I wol forth and to him ygone,
And he ſhal houſil me anone,
For I am out of thy grutching;
I kepe not dele with the nothing.
Thus may he ſhrive him that forſaketh
His pariſh prieſt and to me taketh,
And if the prieſt wol him refuſe
I am full redy him to' accuſe,
And him puniſh and hampir ſo
That he his churchè ſhal forgo.
But who ſo hath in his feling
The conſequence of ſuche ſhriving
Shal ſene that prieſt maie nere have might
To know the conſcience aright
Of him that is undir his cure;
And this is ayenſt holy' ſcripture,
That biddith every herde honeſt
Have very knowing of his beſt;
But povir folke, that gon by ſtrete,
That have no golde ne ſummis grete,
Them would I let to ther prelates,
Or let ther prieſtis know ther ſtates,
For to me right nought yevin thei,
And why it is, for thei ne may.
Thei ben ſo bare I take no kepe,
But I woll havin the fat ſhepe;
Let pariſh prieſtis have the lene;
I yeve not of ther harme a bene:

And if that prelatis grutche it,
That oughtin wroth be in ther wit
To leſin ther ſat beſtis ſo,
I ſhal yeve 'hem a ſtroke or two,
So that thei ſhal leſin with force
Ye, both ther mitre and ther croce.
Thus jape I 'hem, and have do longe,
My privilegis ben ſo ſtrong.
Falſe Semblant would have ſtintid here,
But Love ne made him no ſuche chere
That he was wery of his ſawe,
But for to make him glad and fawe
He ſaid, Tell on more ſpecially
How that thou ſerviſt untruly:
Tel forth, and ſhame the nere a dele,
For as thine habit ſhewith wele
Thou ſerveſt an holy herèmite.
Sothe is but I' am but an ipocrite.
Thou goeſt and prechiſt poverte.
Ye, Sir, but Richeſſe hath poſtè.
Thou prechiſt abſtinence alſo.
Sir, I woll fillen, ſo mote I go,
My paunche of gode mete and gode wine,
As ſhould a maiſtir of divine,
For how that I me povir faine
Yet al povir folke I diſdaine.

I love bettir the acqueintaunce
Ten timis of the King of Fraunce
Than of a pore man of milde mode
Though that his ſoule be all ſo gode,
For whan I ſe beggirs quaking,
Nakid on mixins all ſtinking,
For hungre crie and eke for care,
I entremet not of ther fare;
Thei ben ſo pore and ful of pine
Thei might not ones yeve me a dine,
For thei have nothing but ther life;
What ſhould he yeve that licketh his knife?
It is but foly to' entremete
To ſeke in hound'is neſt fat mete:
Let bere him to the ſpittle' anone,
But for me comfort get thei none:
But a full riche ſicke uſurere
Would I viſitin and drawe nere;
Him would I comforte and rehete,
For I hope of his golde to gete,
And if that wickid Deth him have
I woll go with him in his grave:
And if there any reprove me
Why that I let the povir be,
Woſt thou how I know how to' aſcape?
I ſay and ſwerin him full rape

That richè men han more tetchis
Of ſinne than han theſe pore wretchis,
And han of counſaile more miſtere,
And therfore I would drawe 'hem nere:
But as gret hurt, it maie ſo be,
Hath ſoule in right grete poverte
As ſoule in grete richeſſe forſothe,
Al be it that thei hurtin bothe,
For richeſſe and mendicitee
Bene clepid two extremitees,
The mene is clepid Suffiſaunce,
There lieth of vertue the' aboundaunce.
For Salomon, full wel I wote,
In his wiſe Parablis us wrote,
As it is knowen of many' a wight,
In his thirtieth chapitir right,
God thou me kepe for thy poſtè
Fro richeſſe and mendicite,
For if a richè man him dreſſe
To thinkin to moche on richeſſe
His hert on that ſo ferre is ſette
That he' his Creatour doth foryette,
And him that beggith woll aie greve;
How ſhould I by his worde him leve,
Unneth that he n'is a micher
Forſworne, or els Godd'is lier?
Thus ſayith Salomon'is ſawes.
Ne we find writtin in no lawes,

And namely in our Chriſtin laie,
Who ſo ſaith ye I dare ſay naie,
That Chriſt ne his apoſtils dere,
While that thei walkid in erth here,
Were nevir ſene herbrid begging,
For they n'olde beggin for nothing.
And right thus were men wont to teche,
And in this wiſe wouldin it preche
The maiſtirs of divinite
Somtime in Paris the cite.

And if men would there gaine appoſe
The nakid texte and let the gloſe,
It mightin ſone aſſoilid be,
For men may wel the ſothe yſe
That pardie thei might aſke a thing
Plainly forth withoutin begging,
For they weren Godd'is herdis dere,
And cure of ſoulis haddin here,
Thei ne wolde nothing begge ther fode,
For aftir Chriſt was done on rode
With ther propir hondis thei wrought,
And with traveile, and ellis nought,
Thei wonnin al ther ſuſtinaunce,
And lividin forth in ther penaunce,
And the remènaunt yaf awaie
To othir pore folkis alwaie.

Thei neithir bildin toure ne hall,
But thei in houſis ſmal with alle.
A mighty man, that can and maie,
Should with his honde and body' alwaie
Winne him his fode in labouring,
Yf he ne' have rent or ſuche a thing:
Although he be religious,
And God to ſervin curious,
Thus mote he done or do treſpas,
But if it be in certaine caas,
That I can telle if miſtir be
Right wel whan that the time I ſe.
Seke the boke of Saincte Auguſtine,
Be it in papir or perchemene,
There as he writte of theſe worchinges,
Thou ſhalt ſene that none excuſinges
A perfite man ne ſhould yſeke
By wordis ne by dedis eke,
Although he be religious
And God to ſervin curious,
That he ne ſhal, ſo mote I go,
With propir hondes and body' alſo
Yget his fode in laboring,
Yf he ne' have properte of thing,
Yet ſhould he ſel all his ſubſtaunce,
And with his ſwinke have ſuſtinaunce,
If he be parfite in bounte;
Thus han the bokis toldè me:

For he that wol gone idilly,
And uſith it aie beſily
To hauntin othir menn'is table,
He is a trechour full of fable,
Ne he ne maie by gode reſon
Excuſe him by his oriſon,
For men behovith in ſome giſe
Ben ſomtime out of God's ſerviſe,
To gon and purchaſin ther nede.

Men mote etin, that is no drede,
And ſlepe, and eke do othir thing,
And ſo long may thei leve praying.
So may they eke ther praiere blinne
While that thei werke ther mete to winne;
Seint Auſtin wol therto accorde
In thilkè boke that I recorde.
Juſtinian eke, that made lawes,
Hath thus forbodin by olde ſawes.
No man, up paine for to be ded,
Mighty' of body, to begge his bred
Yf he may ſwinke it for to gete;
Men ſhould him rathir maime or bete,
Or done of him aperte juſtice,
Than ſuffrin him in ſuche malice.

Thei done not wel, ſo mote I go,
Whiche that takin ſuche almeſſe ſo,
But if thei have ſome privilege
That of the paine 'hem woll alege.

But how that is can I not ſe
But if the prince diſcevid be;
Ne I ne wene not ſikirly
That thei maie have it rightfully.
But yet I wol not determine
Of princis powir ne define,
Ne by my worde compre'hende iwis,
Yf it ſo ferre may ſtretche in this;
I wol not entremete a dele
But I trowe that the boke ſaith wele,
Who that taketh almeſſis that be
Dewe to folke that men may yſe
Lame and feble, wery and bare,
Povir, or in ſuche manir care,
That con winnin 'hem nevir mo,
For thei havin no power therto,
He etith his ownè dampning,
But if he lie that made al thing;
And if ye ſuche a truaunt finde
Chaſtiſe him wel if ye be kinde;
But thei would hatin you parcaas
If that ye fillin in ther laas.
Thei would eftſonis do you ſcathe,
If that thei mightin, late or rathe,
For thei be not ful pacient
That han the worlde thus foule yblent:
And wetith wel that God ybad
The gode man ſell al that he had

And folowe' him, and to pore it yeve;
He would not therfore that he live
To ſervin him in mendience,
For it was nevir his ſentence,
But he bad werke whan that nede is,
And folowe him in gode dedis.

Saint Poule, that loved al holy church,
He bade the' apoſtils for to wurch,
And winne ther livelode in that wiſe,
And 'hem defendid truandiſe,
And ſayid, Werkith with your honden:
Thus ſhould the thing be underſtonden.

He n'olde iwis have bid 'hem begging,
Ne ſellin goſpell ne preching,
Leſt thei berafte with ther aſking
Folke of ther cattle' or of ther thing.

For in this world is many' a man
That yeveth his gode, for he ne can
Werne it for ſhame, or ellis he
Would of the' aſkir delivered be,
And for he him encombrith ſo
He yeveth him gode to let him go:
But it can him nothing profite;
Thei leſe the yefte and the merite.

The gode folke that St. Poule to preched
Profrid him ofte, whan he 'hem teched,
Some of ther gode in charite,
But therof right nothing toke he,

But of his hondis would he gette
Clothis to wrine him, and his mete.

Tel me than how a man may liven
That al his gode to pore hath yeven,
And wol but onely bidde his bedes,
And ner with hondes labour his nedes.
May he do so? Ye, Sir. And howe?
Sir, I woll gladly tellin you.
Saint Austin saith, A man may be
In housis that han properte,
As Templers and Hospitèlers,
And as these Chanons Regulers,
Or these White Monkis, or these Blake,
I wol no mo ensamplis make,
And take thereof his susteining,
For therin lyith no begging,
But othirwayis not iwis,
Yet Austin gabbith not of this;
And yet ful many' a monke laboureth
That God in holy churche honoureth,
For whan ther swinking is agon
Thei rede and sing in church anone.
And for there hath ben grete discorde
As many'a wight may bere recorde,
Upon the' estate of mendicience,
I wol shortely in your presence

Tel how a man maie begge at nede,
That hath not wherwith him to fede,
Maugre his felowis janglinges,
For ſothfaſtnes wol none hidinges,
And yet percaſe I may obey,
That I to you ſothly thus ſey.

Lo, here the caſe eſpeciall:
If a man be ſo beſtiall
That he of no craſte hath ſcience,
And nought deſirith ignorence,
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he ſome othir craſte can lerne,
Through whiche withoutin truanding
He may in treuthe have his living:
Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or ſickeneſſe, or langour,
Or for his tendir age alſo,
Than may he yet a begging go:
Or if he have peravinture
Through uſage of his noriture
Livid ovir deliciouſly,
Than oughtin gode folke cominly
Han of his miſcheſe ſome pite,
And ſuffrin him alſo that he
May gon about and begge his bred
That he be not for hongir ded:

Or if he have of crafte conning,
And ſtrength alſo and deſiring
For to worchin, as he had what,
But he finde neithir this ne that,
Than may he beggin till that he
Have gettin his neceſſite:
Or if his winning be ſo lite
That his labour will not aquite
Sufficiauntly al his living
Yet may he go his brede begging,
Fro dore to dore he may go trace
Till he the remnaunt may purchaſe:
Or if a man would undirtake
Any empriſe for to ymake
In the reſcous of our lay,
And it defendin as he may,
Be it with armis or lettrure,
Or othir convenable cure,
If it be ſo that he pore be
Than may he beggin til that he
Maie findin in trouth for to ſwinke,
And get him clothis, mete, and drinke,
Swinke he with his hondes corporel,
And not with hondes eſpirituel.

In all this caſe, and in ſemblables,
If that there ben mo reſonables,

He maie begge as I tell you here,
And ellis not in no manere,
As William Saint Amour would preche,
And oftin would diſpute and teche
Of this matir all opinly
At Paris fully' and ſolemply;
And all ſo God my ſoulè bleſſe
As he had in this ſtedfaſtneſſe
The' acorde of the' Univerſite,
And of the peple', as ſemith me.

No gode man ought it to refuſe,
Ne ought him thereof to excuſe,
Be wrothe or blithe, who ſo thou be,
For I wol ſpeke and tell it the
Al ſhould I die and be put doun,
As was Saint Poule, in derke priſoun,
Or be exilid in this caas
With wrong, as Maiſtir William was,
That my mothir Hypocriſie
Baniſhed for her gret envie.

My mothir flemed him Saint Amour:
This noble man did ſuche labour
To ſuſteine er the loialte,
That he to muche agiltè me:
He made a boke and let it write,
Wherin his life he did all dite,
And would that eche renied begging,
And livin by my traveiling,

If I ne' had rent ne othir gode;
What! wenith he that I were wode?
For labour might me nevir plese,
I have more will to ben at ese,
And have well levir, sothe to saie,
Before the peple pattre' and praie,
And wrie me in my foxerie
Undir a cope of papelardie.
(Quod Love) What divel is this I here?
What wordis tellist thou me here?
What, Sir? Why Falseneſſe that apert is.
Than dredist thou not God? No, certis;
For selde in grete thing shal he spede
In this world that God wol ydrede,
For folke that 'hem to vertue yeven,
And truily on ther owne liven,
And 'hem in godeneſſe aie contente,
On 'hem is litil thrifte isente:
Suche folke ydrinkin grete misese;
That life ne may me nevir plese.
But se what golde han userers,
And silvir eke, in ther garners!
Tailagiers, and these moniours,
Bailiffes, bedils, provostes, countours,
These livin well nigh by ravine;
The smale peple 'hem mote encline,
And thei as wolvis wol 'hem eten;
Upon the povir folke thei geten

Ful muche of that thei ſpende or kepe;
N'is none of 'hem that thei n'il ſtrepe,
And wrine 'hem ſelvin well at full;
Withoutin ſcalding thei 'hem pull:
The ſtrong the feble ovirgothe,
But I that were my ſimple clothe
Robbe bothe the robbid and robbours,
And gile the gilid and gilours;
By my treget I gathre' and threſte
The grete treſour into my cheſte,
That lieth with me ſo faſte ybounde;
Thus myn high paleis do I founde,
And my delitis I fulfill
With wine at feſtis at my will,
And tablis ful of entremees:
I wol no life but eſe and pees,
And winnin golde to ſpende alſo,
For whan the grete bagge is ago
It comith full right with my japes,
Make I not wel tomble mine apes?
To winnen is alwaie mine entent;
My purchace' is bettir than my rent;
For though that I ſhould betin be
Ovir al I entremet me:
Withoutin me maie no wight dure;
I walkin ſoulis for to cure:
Of all the world the cure have I
In brede and eke in length; boldly

I wol bothe preche and eke counſailen:
With hondis wol I not travailen,
For of the Pope I have the bull;
I ne holde not my wittis dull:
I wol not ſtintin in my live
Theſe emperouris for to ſhrive,
Or kingis, dukes, and lordis grete,
But povir folke al quite I lete:
I love no ſuche ſhriving parde,
But it for othir cauſe ybe:
I recke not of theſe povir men;
Ther eſtate is not worthe an hen.
Wher findeſt thou 'a ſwinkir of labour
Have me to be his confeſſoure?
But empreſſis and ducheſſis,
Theſe quenis and eke counteſſis,
Theſe abbeſſis and eke bigins,
And theſe grete ladies palaſins,
Theſe joly knightis and bailives,
Theſe nonnis and theſe burgeis wives,
That riche yben and eke pleſing,
And theſe maidinis welfaring,
Where ſo thei clad or nakid be,
Uncounſailed goeth there none fro me;
And for ther ſoulis ſavite
At lorde and lady', and ther meine,
I aſke, whan thei 'hem to me ſhrive,
The propertie of al ther live,

And make 'hem trowe, both moſte and leſt,
Ther pariſh prieſt is but a beſt
Ayens me and my company,
That ſhrewis ben as gret as I,
Fro whiche I wol not hide in holde
No privite that me is tolde,
That I by worde or ſigne iwis
Ne wol make 'hem know what it is,
And thei wollen alſo tellin me
Thei hele fro me no privite;
And for to make you them perceiven
That uſin folke thus to deceiven,
I wol you ſaine withoutin drede
What men maie in the Goſpell rede
Of Sainct Mathewe the goſpellere,
That ſaieth as I ſhall you ſaie here.

Upon the chairè of Moſes
Thus it is gloſid doutileſs,
(That is, The Oldè Teſtament,
For thereby is the chairè ment)
Sittin Scribis and Phariſen,
That is to ſaine, the curſid men,
Whiche that we Ipocritis call;
Doeth that thei preche I rede you all;
But doeth not as thei doen a dele
That ben not werie to ſaie wele,

But to doe well no will have thei,
And thei would binde on folke alwaie,
That ben to be begilid able,
Burdons that ben importable;
On folkis ſhouldirs thinges thei couchen,
That thei n'ill with ther fingirs touchen;
And why woll thei not touch it? why!
For them ne liſte nat ſikirly,
For the ſadde burdons that men taken
Ymakin folkis ſhouldirs aken.
And if thei doe ought that gode be
That is for folke it ſhouldin ſe;
Ther burdons largir makin thei,
And makin ther hemmes wide alwaie,
And lovin ſetis at the table
The firſt and the moſte honourable;
And for to han the firſt chairis
In ſinagogges to 'hem full dere is,
And willen that folke 'hem loute and grete
Whan that thei paſſin through the ſtrete,
And wollen be cleped Maiſtir alſo;
But thei ne ſhould not willin ſo,
The Goſpell' is there ayenſt I geſſe,
That ſhewith well ther wickidneſſe.

An othir cuſtome uſin we;
Of 'hem that woll ayenſt us be
We hate him dedly everychone,
And we woll werrey him as one;

Him that one hatith hate we all,
And conjecte how to doen him fall;
And if we ſene him winne honour,
Richeſſe or preiſe, through his valour,
Provende or rent, or dignite,
Full faſte iwis compaſſin we
By what laddre' he is clombin ſo;
And for to make him doune to go
With traiſon we woll him defame,
And doen him leſin his gode name.
Thus from his laddir we him take,
And thus his frendis foes we make,
But worde ne wetin ſhall he none
Till al his frendis ben his fone;
For if we did it opinly
We mightin have blame redily,
For had he wiſte of our malice
He had him kept but he were nice.
An othir' is this, that if ſo fall
That there be one emong us all
That doeth a gode tourne, out of drede
We ſaine it is our aldir dede,
Ye, ſikirly though he it fained,
Or that him liſte or that him dained
A man through him avauncid be,
Thereof all partineres be we,
And tellin folke where ſo we go
That man through us is ſprongin ſo.

And for to have of men praiſing
We purchace through our flattering
Of richè men of grete poſte
Lettirs to witneſſe our bounte,
So that man weneth that maie us ſe
That allè vertue in us be.
And alwaie povir we us fain,
But how ſo that we begge or plain
We ben the folke without leſing,
That all thing have without having.
Thus be dradde of the peplè iwis,
And gladly my purpoſe is this:
I delin with no wight but he
Have golde and treſour grete plente;
Ther acquaintaunce well lovin I:
This moche is my deſire ſhortly;
I entremete me of brocages,
I makin pece and mariages,
I am gladly executour,
And many times a procuratour,
I am ſometime a meſſagere,
That fallith not to my miſtere.
And many timis I make enqueſt,
For me that office is nat honeſt;
To dele with othir mennis thing
That is to me a grete liking;
And if that ye have ought to doe
In place that I repairin to

I ſhall it ſpedin through my witte
As ſone as ye have told me it:
So that ye ſervin me to paie
My ſervice ſhall be yours alwaie.
But who ſo woll chaſtiſe me
Anone my love yloſte hath he,
For I love no man in no giſe
That woll me reprove or chaſtiſe,
But I woll all folke undirtake,
And of no wight no teching take;
For I that othir folke chaſtie
Woll not be taught fro my folie.

I ne love none hermitage more;
Al deſertis and holtis hore,
And grete wodis everichone
I let 'hem to the Baptiſt John;
I queth him quite, and him releſſe,
Of Egypt all the wildirneſſe:
To ferre were all my manſiouns
Fro allè citees and gode touns.
My paleis and mine houſe make I
There men maie renne in opinly,
And ſaie that I the worlde forſake;
But all amidde I builde and make
My houſe, and ſwimme and plaie therein
Bette than a fiſhe doth with his finne.

Of Antichriſt'is men am I
Of whiche that Chriſt ſaieth opinly
Thei have habite of holineſſe,
And livin in ſoche wickidneſſe.
All outward lambin ſemin we,
Full of godeneſſe and of pite,
And inwarde we withoutin fable
Ben gredy wolvis raviſable.
We enviroun bothe londe and ſe;
With all the worlde werryin we:
We woll ordain of allè thing,
Of folkis gode and ther living.
If there be caſtill or cite
Within that any bougerons be,
Although that thei of Millaine were,
For thereof ben thei blamid there;
Or if a wight out of meſure
Would lene ther gold and take uſure,
For that he is ſo coveitous,
Or if he be to lechirous,
Or theſe that hauntin ſimonie,
Or provoſt full of trechirie,
Or prelate living jolilie,
Or prieſt that halt his quein him by,
Or oldè whoris hoſtilers,
Or othir baudes or bordillers,

Or ellis blamed of any vice,
Of whiche men ſhouldin doen juſtice;
By all the ſainctis that we preie,
But thei defende them with lampreie,
With luce, with elis, with ſamons,
With tendir gees and with capons,
With tartis or with cheſſis fat,
With deinte ſlaunis brode and flat,
With caleweis or with pullaile,
With coninges or with fine vitaile,
That we undir our clothis wide
Ymakin through our golet glide,
Or but he woll doe come in haſte
Rae veniſon ybake in paſte,
Whethir ſo that he loure or groine
He ſhall have of a corde a loigne,
With whiche men ſhall him binde and lede
To brenne him for his ſinfull dede,
That men ſhull here him crie and rore
A mil'is waie about and more,
Or els he ſhall in priſon die
But if he woll his frendſhip buie,
Or ſmertin that that he hath doe
More than his gilt amountith to.
But and he couthe thorough his ſleight
Doe makin up a toure of height,
Nought rought I wher of ſtone or tre,
Or yerth or turvis, though it be,

Though it were of no vounde ſtone
Ywrought with ſquare and ſcantilone,
So that the toure were ſtuffid well
With allè richis temporell;
And than that he would him up dreſſe
Enginis bothè more and leſſe,
To caſte at us by every ſide,
To berin his gode namè wide.
Soche ſleightis I ſhullin you yeven,
Barelles of wine by ſixe or ſeven,
Or golde in ſackis grete plente,
He ſhould though ſone delivered be;
And if he have no ſuche pitences
Let him ſtudie' in equipolences,
And lerin lies and fallaces,
If that he would deſerve our graces,
Or we ſhall bere him ſoche witneſſe
Of ſinne and of his wretchidneſſe,
And doen his loſe ſo widè renne,
That all quicke we ſhouldin him brenne,
Or ellis yeve him ſoche penaunce
That is well worſe than the pitaunce.
For thou ſhalt nevir for nothing
Con knowen aright by ther clothing
The traitours full of trechèrie
But thou ther werkis can eſpie.
And ne had the gode keping be
Whilom of the' Univerſite,

That kepeth the kei of Chriſtendome,
We' had ben tourmentid all and ſome.
Soche ben the ſtinking Prophetis;
N'is none of 'hem that gode prophete is,
For thei through wickid entencion,
The yere of the' incarnacion
A thouſande and two hundrid yere
Five-and-fifte, ferther ne nere,
Broughtin a boke with ſorie grace,
To yeven enſample in common place,
That ſayid thus, though it were fable,
This the Goſpell pardurable
That fro the Holie Ghoſt is ſent:
Well were it worthy to be ybrent.
Entitlid was in ſoche manere
This boke of whiche I tell here,
There n'as no wight in al Paris
Beſorne our Ladie at parvis
That thei ne might the bokè by;
The ſentence pleſed 'hem well truely.
To' the copie if him talent toke
Of the Evangeliſt'is boke,
There might he ſe by grete traiſoun
Full many' a falſe compariſoun.
As moche as thorough his grete might,
Be it of hete be it of light,
The ſunne yſurmountith the mone,
That troublir is, and chaungith ſone,

And the nutte kerneill dothe the ſhell,
I ſkorne nat that I you it tell,
Right ſo withoutin any gile
Surmountith this noble' Evangile
The worde of any' evangeliſt,
And to ther title thei toke Chriſt.
And many ſoche compariſoun,
Of whiche I make no mencioun,
Mightin men in that boke finde,
Who ſo could of 'hem havin minde.
The' Uni'verſite, that was a ſlepe,
Gan for to braied, and takin kepe,
And at the noiſe the hedde up caſt,
Ne nevir ſithen ſlept it faſt,
But up it ſtert, and armis toke
Ayenſt this falſe horrible boke,
All redy battaile for to make,
And to the judge the boke thei take.
But thei that broughtin the boke there
Hent it anone awaie for fere;
Thei n'old ſhewe it no more a dele,
But than it kept, and kepin wele,
Till ſoche a time that thei maie ſe
That thei ſo ſtrong ywoxin be
That no wight maie 'hem well withſtonde,
For by that boke thei durſt not ſtonde:
Awaie thei gonne it for to bere,
For thei ne durſtin not anſwere

By expoſicion ne gloſe
To that that clerkis woll appoſe
Ayenſt the curſidneſſe iwis
That in that boke ywrittin is.
Now wotte I nat ne can nat ſe
What manir ende that there ſhall be
Of all this whiche that thei yhide,
But yet algate thei ſhall abide
Till that thei maie it bette defende;
This trowe I beſt woll be ther ende.
Thus Antichriſt abidin we,
For we ben all of his meine,
And what man that woll not be ſo
Right ſone he ſhall his life forgo:
We woll a peple' on him areiſe,
And through our gile doin him ceiſe,
And him on ſharpè ſperis rive,
Or othir waies bring him fro live,
But if that he woll folowe' iwis
That in our boke ywrittin is.

Thus moche woll our boke ſignifie,
That while Peter had maiſtirie
Maie nevir John ſhewe well his might.
Now have I you declarid right
The mening of the barke and rinde
That makith the entencions blinde;

But now at erſt I woll begin
To expoune you the pithe within,
And the ſeculers comprehende
That Chriſt'is lawe wollin defende,
And ſhould it kepin and maintenen
Ayeniſt them that all ſuſtenen,
And falſly to the peple techen
That John betokeneth 'hem to prechen
That there n'is lawe covenable
But thilke Goſpell pardurable
That fro the Holy Ghoſt was ſent
To tournin folke that ben miſwent.
The ſtrength of John thei undirſtonde
The grace in whiche thei ſaie thei ſtonde,
That doeth the ſinfull folke convert,
And 'hem to Jeſu Chriſt revert:
Full many'an othre' horriblete
Mowin men in that bokè ſe,
That ben commaundid doutileſs
Ayenſt the lawe of Rome expreſſe,
And all with Antichriſt thei holden,
As men maie in the boke beholden.
And than commandin thei to ſleen
All tho that with Peter yben;
But thei ſhall nevir have that might,
And God to forne, for ſtrief to fight,
That thei ne ſhall ynough yfinde
That Peter's lawe ſhall have in minde,

And evir holde and ſo maintene,
That at the laſt it ſhall be ſene
That thei ſhall all comin thereto
For aught that thei can ſpeke or do.
And thilkè lawe ne ſhall not ſtonde
That thei by John have undirſtonde,
But maugre them it ſhall adoun,
And ben brought to confuſion.
But I woll ſtint of this matere,
For it is wondir long to here;
But had that ilkè boke endured
Of bettre' eſtate I were enſured,
And frendis have I yet parde
That han me ſet in grete degre.

Of all this worlde is emperour
Gile my fathir, the falſe trechour,
And empereſſe my mothir is,
Maugre the Holie Ghoſte iwis.
Our mightie linage and our rout
Reignith in every reigne about,
And well' is worthy we mini'ſters be,
For all this worldè governe we,
And can the folke ſo well deceve
That none our gilis can perceive,
And though thei doen thei dare not ſaie;
The ſothe dare no wight bewraie.

But he in Chriſt'is wrathe him ledeth
That more than Chriſt my brethrin dredeth;
He n'is no full gode champion
That dredeth ſoche ſimilacion,
Nor that for pain woll refuſin
Us to correcte and accuſin.
He woll not entremete by right,
Ne havin God in his eyen ſight,
And therefore God ſhall him punice:
But me ne reckith of no vice
Sithen men us loven communablie,
And holdin us for ſo worthie,
That we maie folke repreve echone,
And we n'ill have repreſe of none:
Whom ſhouldin folke worſhipin ſo
But us that ſtintin nevir mo
To patrin while that folke maie' us ſe
Though it not ſo behinde 'hem be?

And where is there more wode folie
Than to enhauncin chivalrie,
And lovin noble men and gaie,
That jolie clothis weren alwaie?
If thei be ſoche folke as thei ſemen,
So clene as men ther clothis demen,
And that ther wordes folowe ther dede,
It is grete pite out of drede
For thei woll be none hypocritis;
Of 'hem me thinkith gretè ſpite is:

I can not love 'hem on no ſide:
But beggirs with theſe bodis wide,
With ſleigh and palè facis lene,
And with graie clothis nat full clene,
But frettid full of tatar wagges,
And high ſhewis knoppid with dagges,
That frouncin like a qualè pipe,
Or botis riveling as a gipe;
To ſoche folke, as I you deviſe,
Should princis and theſe lordis wiſe
Take all ther landis and ther thinges,
Bothe warre and pece in govirninges,
To ſoche folke ſhould a prince him yeve
That would his life in honour live.
And if thei be nat as thei ſeme,
That ſervin thus the worlde to queme,
There would I dwellin to deceive
The folke, for thei ſhall nat perceve.
But I ne ſpeke in no ſoche wiſe
That men ſhould humble' habite diſpiſe;
So that no pride there undir be
No man ſhould hate, as thinkith me,
The povir man in ſoche clothing;
But God ne preſith him nothing
That ſaieth he hath the worlde forſake,
And hath to worldly glory' him take,
And woll of ſoche delicis uſe;
Who maie that beggir well excuſe?

That papelarde that him yeldith ſo,
And woll to worldly eſe ygo,
And ſaieth that he the worlde hath left,
And gredily it gripith eft,
He is the hounde, ſhame is to ſain,
That to his caſting goeth again.

But unto you dare I not lie,
But might I felin or eſpie
That ye percevid it nothing
Ye ſhouldin have a ſtarke leſing:
Right in your honde thus to beginne,
I ne wolde it let for no ſinne.
The god lough at the wondir tho,
And every wight gan laugh alſo,
And ſayid, Lo, here a man right
For to be truſtie to every wight!

Falſe Semblant, (quod Love) ſaie to me,
Sith I thus have avauncid the,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of Ribaudes ſhalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holdin my forwardes?

Ye, Sir, quod he, from hens forwardes,
Had ner your fathir here beforne
Servaunt ſo true ſithe he was borne.
That is ayeniſt all nature.
Sir, put you in that avinture,

For though ye borowes take of me
The ſikerer ſhall ye nevir be
For hoſtagis ne ſikirneſſe
Or chartris for to bere witneſſe:
I take your ſelf to recorde here
That men ne maie in no manere
Terin the wolfe out of his hide
Till he be ſlain bothe backe and ſide,
Though men him bete and all defile:
What! wene ye that I woll begile?
For I am clothid mekily
There undre' is all my trechiry;
Mine herte chaungith nevir the mo
For none habite in which I go:
Though I have chere of ſimpleneſſe
I am not werie of ſhreudneſſe:
My lemman, ſtrainid Abſtenaunce,
Hath miſtir of my purveiaunce,
She had full long ago be dedde
N'ere for my counſaile and my redde:
Let her alone, and you and me.
And Love anſwèrid, I truſt the
Without borowe, for I woll none.
And Falſe Semblant the thefe anone
Right in that ilkè ſamè place,
That had of treſon all his face
Right blacke within and white without,
Thanking him gan on his knees lout.

Than was there nought but every man
Now to aſſaute that ſailin can,
(Quod Love) and that full hardily:
Than armid thei 'hem cominly
Of ſoche armour as to 'hem fell.
Whan thei were armid fiers and fell
Thei went 'hem forthe all in a rout
And ſet the caſtill all about;
Thei will not awaie for no drede
Till it ſo be that thei ben dede,
Or till thei have the caſtill take.
And four battellis gan thei make,
And partid 'hem in foure anone,
And toke ther waie, and forthe thei gone
The foure gatis for to aſſaile,
Of whiche the kepirs woll not faile;
For thei ben neithir ſicke ne dede,
But hardie folke, and ſtrong in dede.
Now woll I ſaine the countenaunce
Of Falſe Semblant and Abſtinaunce,
That ben to Wickid Tong ywent;
But firſt thei helde ther parliment
Whethir it to be doin were
To makin 'hem be knowin there
Or ellis walkin forthe diſgiſed;
But at the laſte thei deviſed
That thei would gone in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,

Like gode and holie folke unfeined;
And anon Dame Abſtinence ſtreined
Toke on a robe of cameline
And gan her gratche as a bigine.
A largè coverchief of threde
She wrappid all about her hede;
But ſhe forgate not her pſaltere.
A paire of bedis eke ſhe bere
Upon a lace all of white threde,
On whiche that ſhe her bedis bede;
But ſhe ne bought 'hem nevre' a dele,
For thei were given her, I wote wele,
God wote of a full holie frere,
That ſaied he was her fathir dere,
To whom ſhe had oftiner went
Than any frere of his covent;
And he viſitid her alſo,
And many' a ſermone ſaied her to;
He n'olde let for no man on live
That he ne would her oftin ſhrive,
And with ſo grete devocion
Thei madin her confeſſion
That thei had oftin for the nones
Two heddis in one hode at ones.
Of faire ſhape I deviſed her the,
But pale of face ſometime was ſhe;
That falſe traitoureſſe untrewe
Was like that ſalowe horſe of hewe

That in the' Apocalyps is shewed,
That signifieth tho folke beshrewed
That ben all full of trecherie,
And pale thorough hypocrisie;
For on that horse no colour is
But onely dedde and pale iwis:
Of soche a colour enlangoured
Was Abstinence iwis coloured;
Of her estate she her repented
Right as her visage represented.
She had a burdoune all of theft
That Gile had yeve her of his yeft,
And a skrippè of faint distresse,
That full was of elengènesse,
And forthe she walkid sobirlie.
And False Semblant saint, *Je vous die*,
And as it were for soche mistere
Doin on the cope of a frere,
With chere simple and full pitous
His loking was not disdeinous
Ne proude, but meke and ful pesible.
About his necke he bare a Bible,
And squyirly forthe gan he gon,
And for to rest his limmes upon
He had of treson a potent;
As he were feble' his waie he went.
But in his sleve he gan to thring
A rasour sharpe and well biting,

That was yforgid in a forge
Whiche that men clepin Coupè Gorge.
So long forth ther waie thei nomin
Till thei to Wickid Tong comin,
That at his gate ywas sitting,
And sawe folke in the waie passing.
The pilgrimis sawe he fast by
That herin 'hem full mekily,
And humbly thei with him ymette;
Dame Abstinence firſt him ygrette,
And sithe him False Semblant salved,
And he 'hem, but he not remeved,
For he ne drede him not a dele,
For whan he sawe ther facis wele
Alwaie in hertè him thought so
He should knowin 'hem bothe two,
For well he knewe Dame Abstinaunce,
But he ne knewe not Constreinaunce;
He knewe nat that she was constrained,
Ne of her thev'is life yfained,
But wende she come of will all fre,
But she come in othir degre,
And if of gode will she began
That will ywas failid her than.

And False Semblant had he saine alse,
But he knewe nat that he was false;
Yet false was he, but his falsneſſe
Ne coud he nat espie nor gesse,

For Semblant was ſo ſlie ywrought
That falſeneſſe he ne eſpied nought;
But haddeſt thou knowin him beforne
Thou woldiſt on a boke have ſworne,
Whan thou him ſawe in thilke araie,
That he that whilom was ſo gaie,
And of the daunce Jolie Robin,
Was tho become a Jacobin:
But ſothly what ſo men 'hem call
Frere prechouris ben gode men all;
Ther ordir wickidly thei beren
Soche minſtrellis if that thei weren.
So ben Auguſtins and Cordileres,
And Carmis, and eke ſackid freres,
And all the freris ſhode and bare,
Though ſome of 'hem ben grete and ſquare,
Full holy men as I 'hem deme;
Everiche of hem would gode man ſeme;
But ſhalt thou nevir of apparence
Sein conclude gode conſequence
In any argument iwis,
If exiſtens all failid is;
For men maie finde alwaie ſopheme
The conſequence to enveneme,
Who ſo hath had the ſubtilte
The double ſentence for to ſe.
Whan the pilgrimis comin were
To Wickid Tong that dwellid there,

Ther harneis nigh 'hem was algate;
By Wickid Tong adoune thei ſate,
That badde 'hem nere him for to come,
And of tidingis tell him ſome,
And ſaied 'hem, What caſe makith you
To comin into this place now?

Sir, ſayid Strainid Abſtinaunce,
We for to dryin our penaunce
With hertis pitous and devout
Are commen as pilgrimes gon about;
Well nigh on fote alwaie we go;
Full doughtie ben our helis two,
And thus bothe we ben yſent
Throughout the worlde that is miſwent
To yeve enſample' and preche alſo;
To fiſhin ſinfull men we go,
For othir fiſhing ne fiſhe we:
And, leve Sir, for that charite,
As we be wont, erbo'rowe we crave;
Your life to amenne Chriſt it ſave,
And ſo it ſhould you not diſpleſe
We wouldin, if it were your eſe,
A ſhort ſermon unto you ſain.
And Wickid Tong anſwered again,
The houſe (quod he) ſoche as ye ſe
Shall nat be warnid you for me:

Saie what you liſt and I woll here.
Graunt mercie! tho ſwetè Sir dere,
Quod aldirfirſt Dame Abſtinence,
And thus began ſhe her ſentence:
Sir, the firſt vertue for certaine,
The gretiſt and moſt ſoverraine
That maie be founde in any man
For having or for wit he can
That is his tong for to refrain;
Therto ought every wight him pain,
For it is bettir ſtill to be
Than for to ſpekin harme parde,
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no gode man ſikirly.
And, Sir, aboven all othir ſinne
In that art thou moſt giltie inne;
Thou ſpake a jape not long a go,
And, Sir, that was right evill doe.
Of a yong man that here repaired,
And nevir yet this place apaired,
Thou faideſt he awaitid nothing
But to diſceve Faire Welcoming:
Ye ſaidin nothing ſothe of that,
But, Sir, ye lie, I tell you plat:
He cometh no more ne goeth parde;
I trowe ye ſhal him nevir ſe;
Faire Welcoming in priſon is
That ofte hath plaied with you er this

The fairiſt gamis that he coude
Withoutin filth, or ſtil or loude;
Now dare he not himſelfe ſolace;
Ye han alſo the man do chace,
That he dare neithir come ne go:
What mevith you to hate him ſo
But propirly your wickid thought,
That many' a falſe leſing hath thought,
That mevith your foule eloquence,
That janglith evre' in audience,
And on the folke ariſith blame,
And doeth 'hem diſhonour and ſhame
For thing that maie have no preving
But likelineſſe and contriving?
For I dare ſaine that Reſon demeth
It is not al ſoth thing that ſemeth;
And it is ſinne for to controve
Any thing that is to reprove;
This wote ye wele, and, Sir, therfore
Ye arne to blame mochil the more;
And nathèleſſe he reckith lite
He yeveth not now therof a mite,
For if he thoughtin harme, parfaie
He would ycome and gone all daie;
He ne coude not himſelf abſtene:
Now cometh he not, and that is ſene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But if it be through avinture,

And laſſe than othir folke algate,
And thou here watchiſt at the gate
With ſpere in thine areſt alwaie,
There muſe muſarde all the longe daie;
Thou wakiſt night and daie for thought;
Iwis thy traveile is for nought,
And Jelouſie withoutin faile
Shall nevir quite the thy traveile;
And ſkathe is that Faire Welcoming,
Withoutin any treſpaſſing,
Shal wrongfully in priſon be,
There wepith and languiſhith he;
And though thou nevir yet iwis
Agiltiſt man no more but this
Take not a greſe, it were worthy
To put the out of this baily,
And aftirwarde in priſon lie,
And fettrid the till that thou die;
For thou ſhalt for this ſinnè dwelle
Right in the devil's arſe of helle
But if that thou repentè the.
Maiſaie thou lieſt falſely (quod he.)
What, welcome with miſchaunce now!
Have I therfore herherid you
To ſaie me ſhame and eke reprove,
With ſorie happe to your behove?
Am I to day your herbegere?
Go herbir you els where than here

That han a lier callid me.
Two tregetours arte thou and he,
That in mine hous do me this shame,
And for my sothesawe ye me blame.
Is this the sermon that ye me make?
To all the divils I me take,
Or ellis God thou me confounde,
But er men didden this castill founde
It passith not ten daies or twelve
But it was tolde right to my selve,
And as thei saide right so tolde I;
He kiste the Rosē privily;
Thus saide I now, and have said yore,
I n'ot where he did any more:
Why should men saie me suche a thing
If that it had yben gabbing?
Right so saide I, and woll saie yet,
I trowe I lyid not of it;
And with my hemis I woll blowe
To allè neighbouris arowe
How he hath bothe comin and gone.

Tho spake False Semblant right anone,
All is nat gospell out of doute
That men saine in the toune aboute:
Lay no defe ere to my speking,
I swere you, Sir, it is gabbing;
I trow ye wote well certainly
That no man loveth him tendirly

That saith him harme, if he wote it,
All be he ner so pore of wit;
And sothe is also sikirly,
This know ye, Sir, as well as I,
That lovirs gladly wol visiten
The placis there ther loves habiten:
This man you loveth and eke honoureth,
This man to servin you laboureth,
And clepith you his frende so dere,
And this man makith you gode chere,
And every where that he you meteth
He you saleweth and he you greteth;
He presith nat so ofte that ye
Oughte of' his coming encombrid be;
There presin othir folke on you
Ful oftir than he doith now;
And if his hert him strainid so
Unto the Rose for to go
Ye should him sene so oftin nede
That ye should take him with the dede;
He coude his comming not forbere,
Though ye him thrillid with a spere;
It n'ere not than as it is now;
But trustith well, I swere it you,
That it is clene out of his thought.
Sir, certis he ne thinketh it nought,
No more ne doth Faire Welcoming,
That sore abyith all this thing,

And if thei were of one assent,
Full sone ywere the Rose ybent,
Tho the malgre your's would ybe.
And, Sir, of o thing herkeneth me;
Sithe ye this man that lovith you
Han saide such harme and shame now,
Wittith well if he gessid it
Ye maie well demin in your wit
He ne wolde nothing love you so,
Ne callin you his frende also,
But night and daie he wollin wake
The castill to distroie and take,
Yf it were sothe as ye devise;
Or some man in some manir wise
Might it warnin him every dele,
Or by himselfe percevin wele,
For sithe he might not come and gone,
As he was whilom wonte to done,
He might it sonè wite and se,
But now all othirwise wote he.
Than have we, Sir, all uttirly
Deservid hell, and jolily
The deth of hellè doutilesse,
That thrallin folke so giltilesse.
False Semblant so provith this thing
That he ne can none answering,
And seeth alwaie soche apparaunce
That nigh he fel in repentaunce,

And ſaid him; Sir, it maie well be;
Semblant, a gode man ſemin ye,
And Abſtinence, ful wiſe ye ſeme;
Of o talent you bothe I deme:
What counſaile wol ye to me yeven?
Right here anon thou ſhalt be ſhriven,
And ſay thy ſinne withoutin more;
Of this ſhalt thou repent the ſore,
For I am prieſt, and have poſte
To ſhrive folk of moſt dignite
That ben as wide as world maie dure;
Of al this world I have the cure,
And that had nevir yet perſoun
Ne vicarie' of no manir toun.
And God it wot I have of the
A thouſande timis more pite
Than hath thy prieſt parochiall,
Though he thy frende be ſpeciall.
I have avantage in o wiſe,
That your prelates ben not ſo wiſe
Ne halfe ſo lettrid as am I;
I am licenſid boldily
In divinite for to rede,
And to confeſſin out of drede.
Yf that ye wol you now confeſſe,
And leve your ſinnis more and leſſe,
Without abode knele doune anon
And you ſhal have abſolucion.

Here endeth The Romaunt of the Roſe.

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOKES.

THE double ſorow of Troilus to telle,
That was the King Priamus ſonne of Troy,
In loving how his aventuris felle
From wo to wele, and aſtir out of joy,
My purpoſe is er that I parte fro'y.
Thou Theſiphone! thou helpe me t'endite
This woful verſe, that wepin as I write.

To the I clepe, thou goddeſſe of tourment,
Thou cruil wight, ſorowing ay in paine!
Helpe me, that am the wofull inſtrument
That helpith lovirs as I can complaine;
For wel ſit it, the ſothe for to ſaine,
A woful wight to have a drery fere,
And to a ſorowfull tale a ſory chere.

For I, that god of Lov'is ſervauntes ſerve,
Ne dare to love for mine unlikelineſſe,
Prayin for ſpede, al ſhould I therfore ſterve,
So ferre am I fro his helpe in derkeneſſe;
But natheleſſe if this may done gladneſſe
To any lovir, and his cauſe aveile,
Have he the thanke and mine be the traveile.

Troilus and Creſeide.] In this excellent boke is ſhewed the fervent love of Troilus to Creſeide, whom he enjoyed for a time, and her grete untruthe to him againe in giving her ſelf to Diomedes, who in the end did ſo caſt her off that ſhe came to grete miſery. In whiche diſcourſe Chaucer liberally treteth of the divine purveiaunce. *Urry.*

But ye lovirs that bathin in gladneſſe,
Yf any drope of pite in you be,
Remembrith you of paſſid hevineſſe
That ye have felte, and on the' adverſite
Of othir folke, and thinkith how that ye
Han felte that Love durſt you to diſpleſe
Or ye han won him with to gret an eſe. 28
And prayith for 'hem that ben in the cace
Of Troilus, as ye may aftir here
That Love 'hem bring in hevin to ſolace;
And eke for me prayith to God ſo dere,
That I have might to ſhew in ſome manere
Suche paine and wo as Lov'is folke endure
In Troilus unſely avinture. 35
And biddith eke for them that ben diſpeired
In love, that nevir will recovered be,
And eke for them that falſely ben apeired
Through wickid tongis, be it he or ſhe,
And biddith God for his benignite
So graunt 'hem ſone out of this world to pace
That ben diſpairid out of Lov'is grace. 42
And biddith eke for them that ben at eſe
That God 'hem graunt in love perſeveraunce,
And ſende 'hem grace ther lovis for to pleſe,
That it to love be worſhip and pleſaunce;
For ſo hope I my ſelfe beſt to avaunce
To pray for them that Lov'is ſervauntes be,
And write ther wo, and live in charite; 49

And for to have of them compaſſioun,
As though I were ther owne brothir dere.
Now herkenith with a gode entencioun,
For now wol I go ſtreight to my matere,
In whiche ye may the double ſorowes here
Of Troilus in loving of Creſeide,
And how ſhe forſoke him er that ſhe deide. 56

It is wel wiſt how that the Grekis ſtrong
In armis with a thouſand ſhippis went
To Troiè wardis, and the cite long
Beſiegedin, nigh ten yeres ere thei ſtent,
And how in divers wife and one entent,
The raviſhing to wreke of Queine Heleine,
By Paris don, thei wroughtin all their peine. 63

Now fell it ſo that in the toune there was
Dwelling a lord of gret authorite,
A gret divine, that clepid was Calcas,
That in that ſcience ſo' experte was that he
Knew wel that Troiè ſhould diſtroyid be
By anſwere of his god, that hight was thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus. 70

So whan this Calcas knew by calculing,
And eke by the' anſwere of this god Apollo,
That Grekis ſhouldin ſuche a peple bring
Thorow the whiche that Troy muſt be fordo,
He caſte anone out of the toune to go,
For wel he wiſt by ſorte that Troiè ſholde
Diſtroyid be, ye, would who ſo or n'olde; 77

Wherfore for to departin ſoftily
Toke purpoſe ful this wight, forknowing, wiſe,
And to the Grekis hoſt ful privily
He ſtale anone, and thei in curteis wiſe
Didin to him both worſhip and ſervice,
In truſt that he hath conning 'hem to rede
In every peril which that was to drede. 84

Grete rumour roſe whan it was firſt eſpied
In al the toune, and opinly was ſpoken
That Calcas traitour fled was, and alied
To them of Grece; and caſte was to be wroken
On him that falſly hath his faith to broken,
And ſaid that he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones. 91

Now had this Calcas lefte in this miſchaunce,
Unknowing of this falſe and wicked dede,
A doughtir whiche that was in grete penaunce,
And of her life ſhe was full ſore in drede,
And ne wiſt nevir what beſt was to rede;
And as a widowe was ſhe and alone,
And n'iſt to whom ſhe might ymake her mone. 98

Creſeide ywas this ladies name aright;
As to my dome in al Troy'is cite
Moſt fairiſt lady, paſſing every wight;
So angelike ſhone her natife beaute
That like a thing immortal ſemid ſhe,
And therwith was ſhe ſo parfite a creture
As ſhe had be made in ſcorning of Nature. 105

This lady, whiche that al day herde at ere'
Her fathir's shame, his falshed, and traisoun,
Ful nigh out of her wit for sorow' and fere,
In widowe's habite large of samite broun,
Before Hector on knees she fill adoun,
His mercy bad, her selfin excusing
With pitous voice, and tendirly weping. 112

Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorowful begone,
And that she was so faire a creature,
Of his godenesse he gladid her anone,
And saidè, Let your fathir's traison gone
Forth with mischaunce, and ye your self in joye
Dwellith with us whilis you list in Troye, 119

And al the honour men may do you have,
As ferforth as though your fathir dwelt here,
Ye shul have, and your body shul men save,
As fer as I may ought enquire and here.
And she him thankid with ful humble chere,
And oftir wolde and it had been his will,
And toke her leve, went home, and helde her still. 126

And in her house she' abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was for to holde;
And while she was dwelling in that cite
She kepte her estate, and of yong and olde
Ful wel beloved, and wel men of her tolde;
But whethir that she childrin had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone. 133

The thingis fellin as thei done of werre
Betwixin 'hem of Troie and Grekis ofte,
For ſome day boughtin thei of Troie it derre,
And eft the Grekis foundin nothing ſoft
The folke of Troie: and thus Fortune aloft
And undir eſte gan 'hem to whelmin bothe,
Aftir her courſe, aie while that thei wer wrothe.

But how this toune came to diſtruccion
Ne fallith not to purpoſe me to tel;
For why? it were a long digreſſion
Fro my matir, and you to long to dwel;
But the Troyan jeſtis, all as thei fel
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who ſo that can may rede 'hem as thei write.

But though the Grekis them of Troie in ſhetten,
And ther cite beſegid al aboute,
Ther olde uſagis n'oldin thei not letten,
As to honouren ther goddis ful devoute,
But aldirmoſt in honour out of doute
Thei had a relicke hight Palladion,
That was ther truſt abovin everichon.

And ſo befel, whan comin was the time
Of Aprilis, whan clothid is the mede
With newè grene, of luſty Ver the prime,
And with ſwete ſmelling flouris white and rede
In ſondrie wiſe ſhewid, as I you rede,
The folke of Troie ther obſervaunces olde,
Palladion'is feſt, went for to holde.

Unto the temple in all ther beſt wiſe
In general went every manir wight
To herkin of Palladion's ſervice,
And namily many a luſty knight,
And many' a lady freſh and maidin bright;
Full well beſeyn the moſt meynè and leſt
Both for the ſeſon and for the hie feſt. 168

Among theſe othir folke was Creſeida,
In widdowe's habite blake; but nathèles
Right as our firſt lettir is now an A,
In beaute firſt ſo ſtode ſhe makèles;
Her godely loking gladdid all the pres;
N'as nevir ſene thing to be praiſed ſo derre,
Nor under cloudè blake ſo bright a ſterre 175

As was Creſeide, thei ſaidin everichone
That her beheldin in her blakè wede;
And yet ſhe ſtode ful lowe and ſtil alone,
Behinde all othir folke, in litil brede,
And nie the dore, aye undir ſham'is drede,
Simple' of atire, and debonaire of chère,
With full aſſurid loking and manere. 182

Dan Troilus, as he was wont to gide
His yongè knightis, ladde 'hem up and doune
In thilke large temple on everỳ ſide,
Beholding aie the ladies of the toune
Now here now there, for no devocioune
Had he to none to revin him his reſt,
But gan to praiſe and lackin whom he leſt. 189

And in his walke ful faſte he gan to waiten
If knight or ſquyir of his company
Gan for to ſike, or let his eyin baiten
On any woman that he coude eſpie,
Then he would ſmile, and holde it a folie,
And ſay him thus; O Lord! ſhe ſlepith ſofte
For love of the, whan thou turniſt ful ofte.

I have herde tel pardieux of your living,
Ye lovirs, and of your leude obſervaunce,
And whiche a labour folke have in winning
Of love, and in the keping whiche doutaunce,
And whan your pray is loſt wo and penaunce.
O very folis! blinde and nice be ye,
There is not one can ware by othir be.

And with that worde he gan caſt up his browe
Aſcaunce, lo! is this not wiſely iſpoken?
At whiche the god of Love gan lokin rowe
Right for diſpite, and ſhope him to be wroken;
He kidde anon his bowe was not to broken,
For ſodainly he hitte him at the full,
And yet as proude a pecocke can he pul.

O blinde worlde! o blinde entencioun!
How oftin fallith al th' effecte contraire
Of furquedrie and foule preſumpcioun?
For caught is proude and caught is debonaire;
This Troilus is clombin on the ſtaire,
And litil wenith that he mote diſcende;
But al day fallith thing that folis wende.

As proude Bayard beginnith for to skippe
Out of the way (so prickith him his corne)
Till he a lashe have of the longè whippe,
Than thinkith he though I praunce al beforne
Firſt in the traise, full fatte and newe ishorne,
Yet am I but an horse, and hors'is lawe
I muſt endure, and with my feris drawe:

So fared it by this fiers and proudè knight;
Though he a worthy king'is sonnè were,
And wenid that nothing had had such might
Ayenſt his wil that should his hertè stere,
Yet with a loke his hert ywoxe on fire,
That he that now was moſt in pride above
Woxe sodainly moste subject unto love.

Forthy ensample takith of this man
Ye wiſe, proude, and worthy folkis all,
To skornin Love, whiche that so sonè can
The fredome of your hertis to him thral;
For evir was and evir shall befal
That Love is he that al thingis may binde,
For no man maie fordo the law of kinde.

That this be sothe hath previd and doth yet;
For this (trowe I) ye knowin al and some,
Men redin nat that folke han gretir wit
Than thei that han ben moſt with love inome,
And strengiſt folke ben therwith ovircome,
The worthyiſt and gretiſt of degre;
This was and is, and yet man shal it se.

And truliche it ſitte well to be ſo,
For aldirwiſiſt han therwith ben pleſed,
And thei that han ben aldirmoſte in wo
With love ſian ben comfortid moſt and eſed,
And ofte it hath the cruill herte apeſed,
And worthy folke made worthyir of name,
And cauſith moſt to dredin vice and ſhame.

Now ſith it may nat godely be withſtonde,
And is a thing ſo vertuous in kinde,
Ne grudgith nought to Love for to ben bonde,
Sithe as him ſelvin liſt he may you binde;
The yerde is bette that bowin wol and winde
Than that that breſt; and therfore I you rede
Folowith him that ſo well can you lede.

But for to tellin forth in ſpeciall
As of this king is ſonne of whiche I tolde,
And levin othir thing collaterall,
Of him thinke I my tale forth to holde,
Bothe of his joye and of his caris colde,
And all his werke as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I wol therto refere.

Within the temple wente him forth playing
This Troilus with every wight about,
On this lady and now on that loking,
Whereſo ſhe were of toune or of without;
And upon caſe befil that through a rout
His eye ypercid, and ſo depe it went
Tikon Creſeide it ſmote, and there it ſtent,

And ſodainly for wondir wext aſtoned,
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wiſe;
O mercy, God! thought he, where haſt thou wonned,
That arte ſo faire and godely to deviſe?
Therwith his hertt began to ſprede and riſe,
And ſofte he ſighid, leſt men might him here,
And caught ayen his formir playing chere.

She n'as nat with the leſte of her ſtature,
But al her limmis ſo wel anſwering
Werin to womanhode, that creature
Was nevir laſſe manniſhe in ſeming,
And eke the purè wiſe of her mening
She ſhewid wel, that men might in her geſſe
Honour, eſtate, and womanly nobleſſe.

Tho Troilus right wondir wel withall
Gan for to like her mening and her chere,
Whiche ſomdele deignous was, for ſhe let fal
Her loke alite a ſide, in ſuche manere
Aſcauncis, what! may I nat ſtondin here?
And aftir that her loking gan ſhe light,
That never thought him ſene ſo gode a ſight.

And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So grete deſire and ſuche affectioun,
That in his hert'is bottom gan to ſticken
Of her his fixe and depe impreſſioun;
And though he erſt had porid up and doun
Than was he glad his hornis in to ſhrinke;
Unnethis wiſt he how to loke or winke.

Lo! he that lete him selvin so conning,
And scornid 'hem that lov'is painis drien,
Was ful unware that Love had his dwelling
Within the subtil stremis of her eyen,
That sodainly him thought that he felte dien
Right with her loke the spirite in his herte:
Blessid be Love, that thus can folke converte!

She thus in blake loking to Troilus
Ovir al thing he stode for to beholde,
But his desire, ne wherefore he stode thus,
He neithir chere made ne worde thereof tolde,
But from aferre, his manir for to holde,
On othir thing somtime his loke he cast,
And efte on her, while that the service last.

And aftir this, not fully all awhaped,
Out of the temple esiliche he wente,
Repenting him that evir he had japed
Of Lov'is folke, lest fully the discente
Of scorne fil on him self; but what he mente
Leste it were wiste on any manir side
His wo he gan dissimulin and hide.

Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
He streight anone unto his palais turneth;
Right with her loke thorough shottin and darted,
Al frainith he in luste that he sojourneth,
And all his chere and speche also' he abnormeth,
And aie of Lov'is servauntes every while,
Himselfe to wrie, at 'hem he gan to smile,

And sayd, Ah, Lord! so ye live all in lust,
Ye lovirs, for the conningist of you,
That servith most ententifeliche and best,
Him tite as oftin harme therof as prowe;
Your hire is quite ayen, ye, God wote howe,
Not wel for wel, but skorne for gode servise;
In faithe your ordir is ruled in gode wise.
In no certaine ben your observaunces,
But it in a few sely pointis be,
Ne nothing asketh so gret attendaunces
As doth your laie, and that knowin al ye;
But that is not the worst, as mote I the,
But tolde I which were the worst point, I leve,
Al saide I sothe, ye woldin at me greve.
But take this; that ye lovirs ofte eschewe,
Or ellis done of gode entencion,
Ful ofte thy lady wol it misseconstrewe,
And deme it harme in her opinion,
And yet if she for othir encheson
Be wroth, then shalt thou have a groin anone:
Lorde! wel is him that may bene of you one!
But for al this, whan that he seeth his time,
He held his pees, non othir bote him gained,
For Love began his fethirs so to lime,
That wel unneth unto his folke he fained
That othir bely nedis him distrained:
So wo was him that what to done he n'ist,
But bad his folke to gone where as 'hem list.

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune upon his bedd'is fete him fette,
And firſt he gan to ſike and efte to grone,
And thought aie on her ſo withoutin lette,
That as he ſatte and woke his ſpirite mette
That he her ſaugh and temple', and all the wiſe
Right of her loke, and gan it newe aviſe.

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his minde,
In whiche he ſaugh all wholly her figure,
And that he wel coude in his hert yfinde
It was to him a right gode avinture
To love ſuche one, and if he did his cure
To ſervin her yet might he fal in grace,
Or els for one of her ſervauntes pace:

Imagining that ne travaile nor grame
Ne might for ſo godely an one be lorne,
As ſhe ne him for his deſire no ſhame,
Al were it wiſte, but in priſe and upborne
Of alle lovirs, wel more than beforne.
Thus argumentid he in his ginning,
Ful unaviſid of his wo comming.

Thus toke he purpoſe Lov'is crafte to ſewe,
And thought that he would workin privily,
Firſt for to hide all his deſire in mewe,
From every wight iborne all uttirly,
But he might ought recovered ben therby,
Remembring him that *Love to wide ildowe*
Yelt bittir frute, although ſwete ſede be ſowe.

And ore al this ful mokil more he thought
What for to ſpeke and what to holdin inne,
And what to artin her to love he ſought,
And on a ſonge anone right to beginne,
And gan loude on his ſorowe for to winne;
For with gode hope he gan fully aſſente
Creſeida for to love, and nought repente. 392

And of his ſonge not onely his ſentence,
(As write mine auctour, callid Lolius)
But plainely, ſave our tong'is difference,
I dare wel ſay in al that Troilus
Saied in his ſonge, lo! every word right thus
As I ſhal ſaine, and who ſo liſt it here
Lo! next this verſe he may it findin here. 399

The ſonge of Troilus out of Petrarche.

If no love is, o God, what fele I ſo!
And if love is, what thing and whiche is he?
If love be gode from whence comith my wo?
If it be wicke a wondir thinkith me,
Whan every turment and adverſite
That cometh of him may to me ſavery thinke,
For aye more thurſt I the more that I drinke. 406

And if that at mine ownè luſt I brenne,
From whence comith my wailing and my pleinte?
If harme agre me wherto plaine I thenne?
I n'ot nere why unwery that I feinte.
O quickè deth! o ſwetè harme ſo queinte!
How may I ſe in me ſoche quantite
But if that I conſente that it ſo be? 413

And if that I consente I wrongfully
Complaine iwis. Thus possid to and fro,
As sterelesse wight is in a bote, am I,
Amidde the se atwixin windis two
That in contrarie stondin evirmo.
Alas! what is this wondir maladie?
For hete of colde, for colde of here, I die.

And to the god of Love thus sayid he
With pitous voice; O Lorde! now your'is is
My spirite, whiche that oughtin your'is be;
You thonke I, Lord, that han me brought to this;
But whethir goddesse or woman iwis
She be I n'ot whiche, that ye do me serve,
But as her man I wol aie live and sterve.

Ye stondin in her eyin mightily,
As in a place unto your vertue digne,
Wherfore o Lord! if my service or I
May likin you, so bethe me to ben,
For mine estate royal here I resigne
Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere.

Endeth the songe.

In him ne deigned to sparin blode royall
The fire of love, wherefro may God me blesse!
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue or his excellent prowesse,
But helde him as his thrall lowe in distresse,
And brende him so in sondrie wise aie newe,
That sixty times a day he loste his hewe.

So muchill daie fro daie his ownè thought
For luſte to her gan quickin and encreſe,
That everiche othir charge he ſette at nought;
Forthy ful oftin, his hote fire to cefe,
To ſene her godely loke he gan to preſe;
For therby to ben eſid wel he wende;
And aie the nere he was the more he brende;
For aie the nere the fire the hottir is,
This (trowe I) knowith al this company;
But were he ſarre or nere I dare ſaie this,
By night or daie, for wiſedome or folie,
His hertè, whiche that is his breſt's eye,
Was aie on her, that fairir was to ſene
Than evir was Helein or Polyxene.
Eke of the daie there paſſid nat an houre
But to himſelf a thouſande times he ſaide,
God godely, to whom I ſerve and laboure
As beſt I can, now would to God, Creſeide,
Ye wouldin on me rue er that I diede;
My dere herte, alas! mine hele, and my hewe,
And life, is loſte but ye woll on me rewe.
All othir dredis werin from him fledde
Bothe of th' aſſiege and his ſalvacion,
Ne' in his deſire none othir fancy bredde
But argumentes to this concluſion,
That ſhe on him would han compaſſion,
And he to ben her man while he maie dure;
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure.

The sharpè shouris fell of armis preve
That Hector or his othir brethrin didden
Ne made him onely therefore onis meve,
And yet was he, wher so men went or ridden,
Found one the hest, and lengist time abiden
There peril was, and eke did suche travail
In armis that to thinke it was mervaile.

But for none hate he to the Grekis had,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armis for to mad,
But onely lo! for this conclusioun,
To likin her the bet for his renoun:
Fro daie to daie in armis so he spedde
That all the Grekis as the deth him dredde.

And fro this forthe tho rest him love his slepe,
And made his mete his foe, and eke his sorow
Gan multiplie, that who so toke kepe
It shewid in his hewe both even and morow,
Therfore a title he gan him to borowe
Of othir sickenesse, lest men of him wende
That the hotte fire of cruill love him brende;

And saied he by a sevir fared amis:
But how it was certain I cannot say,
If that his ladie understode nat this,
Or fainid her she n'ist, one of the tweie;
But well rede I that by no manir weie
Ne semid it as if she on him rought,
Or of his paine, what so evir he thought.

But than yfelt this Troilus ſoche wo
That he was wel nigh wode; for aie his drede
Was this, that ſhe ſome wight had lovid ſo
That ner of him ſhe would han takin hede,
For whiche him thought he felte his hertè blede;
Ne of his wo ne durſt he nought begin
To tellin her for all this worlde to win.

But whan he had a ſpace left from his care
Thus to himſelf full oft he gan to plain;
He ſaied, O fole! now art thou in the ſnare
That whilom japediſt at lov'is pain;
Now art thou hent; now gnaw thin ownè chain:
Thou wert aie woned eche lovir reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canſt nat the defende.

What woll now every lovir ſaine of the
If this be wiſt? but er in thine abſence
Laughin in ſcorne, and ſain, Lo! there goth he;
That is the man of ſo grete ſapience,
That helde us lovirs leſte in reverence:
Now thanked be God he maie gon on the daunce
Of 'hem that Love liſte febly to avaunce:

But o thou wofull Troilus! God would
(Sithe thou muſt lovin through thy deſtine)
That thou beſet wer of ſoche one that ſhould
Know all thy wo, all lackid her pite!
But all ſo colde in love towardis the
Thy ladie is as froſt in wintir mone,
And thou ſordon as ſnowe in fire is ſone.

God would I were arivid in the port
Of deth, to whiche my ſorowe woll me lede!
Ah, Lorde! to me it were a grete comfort,
Than were I quite of languiſhing in drede,
For by my hidde ſorowe ihlowe in brede
I ſhall bejapid ben a thouſande time
More than that ſole of whoſe ſoly men rime.

But now helpe God, and ye my ſwete, for whom
I plaine; icought ye nevir wight ſo faſt:
O mercie, my dere herte! and helpe me from
The deth, for I while that my life maie laſt
More than my life woll love you to my laſt;
And with ſome frendly loke gladith me, ſwete!
Though nevir nothing more ye me behete.

Theſe wordis and full many' an othir mo
He ſpake, and callid evir in his pleinte
Her name, to tellin unto her his wo,
Till nigh that he in ſalte teris was dreinte:
All was for nought; ſhe herd nat his compleinte;
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thouſand folde his wo gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chambir thus alone
A frende of his, that callid was Pandare,
Came onis in unware, and herd him grone,
And ſawe his frend in ſoche diſtreſſe and care;
Alas! (quod he) who cauſith all this fare?
O mercie God! what unhap maie this mene?
Han now thus ſone the Grekis made you lene?

Or haſt thou ſome remorce of conſcience?
And art now fall in ſome devocioun,
And wailiſt for thy ſinne and thine offence,
And haſt for ferde ycought contricioun?
God ſave 'hem that beſiegid han our toun,
That ſo can laie our jolite on preſſe,
And bring our luſtie folke to holineſſe!

Theſe wordis ſaied he for the nonis all,
That with ſoche thing he might him angry maken,
And with his angre doen his ſorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken;
But well wiſt he, as ferre as tongis ſpeken,
There n'as a man of gretir hardineſſe
Than he, ne more deſirid worthineſſe.

What cas (quod Troîlus) or what avinture
Hath gidid the to ſeke me languiſhing,
That am refuſe of every creture?
But for the love of God, at my praying,
Go hence awaie, for certis my dying
Woll the diſeſe, and I mote nedis deie,
Therfore go waie; there n'is no more to ſeie.

But if thou wene I be thus ſicke for drede
It is nat ſo, and therefore ſcorne me nought;
There is an othir thing I take of hede
Wel more than ought the Grekis han yet wrought,
Which cauſe is of my deth for ſorow and thought,
But though that I now tell it the ne leſte
Be thou nat wrothe; I hide it for the beſte.

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo and routh,
Full oftin saied, Alas! what maie this be?
Now frende, (quod he) if evir love or trouth
Hath ben er this betwixin the and me
Ne doe thou nevir soche a cruilte
To hidin fro thy frende so grete a care;
Wost thou not well that it am I Pandare?
I woll partake with the of all thy paine;
If it so be I doe the no comfort,
As it is frend'is right, sothe for to saine,
To enterpartin wo as glad disport
I have and shall; for true or false report,
In wrong and right, iloved the all my live;
Hide not thy wo from me, but tell it blive.
Than gan this sorowfull Troilus to sike,
And saied him thus; God leve it be my best
To tellin the, for sithe it maie the like
Yet woll I tell it the though my herte brest,
And well wote I thou maiest do me no rest,
But lest thou deme that I trust nat to the:
Now herkin frende, for thus it stant with me.
Love, ayenst the whiche who so defendith
Him selvin moste him aldirlest availeth,
With dispeire so sorely me offendith
That streight unto the deth mine hert yfaileth,
Thereto desire so brenningly me' assaileth
That to ben slain it were a gretir joie,
To me than king of Grece to be and Troie.

Suffiſith this, my fully frende Pandare,
That I have ſaied, for now woteſt thou my wo,
And for the love of God my colde care
So hide it well, I tolde it ner to mo,
For harmis mightin folowen mo than two
If it were wiſt; but be thou in gladneſſe,
And let me ſterve unknowe of my diſtreſſe.

How haſt thou thus unkindely and long
Hid this fro me, thou ſole? (quod Pandarus)
Paraventure thou maieſt for ſoche one long
That mine aviſe anone maie helpin us.
This were a wondir thing, (quod Troilus)
Thou couldiſt ner in love thy ſelfin wiſſe,
How devill maieſt thou bringin me to bliſſe?

Ye, Troilus, now herkin, (quod Pandare.)
Though I be nice, it happith oftin ſo,
That one that of axis doeth full ill fare
By gode counſaile can kepe his frend therſro;
I have my ſelf yſeine a blinde man go
There as he fell which that could lokin wide:
A fole maie eke a wiſe man oftin gide.

A whetſtone is no kerving inſtrument,
But yet it makith ſharpe kerving tolis;
And if thou woſt that I have aught miſwent
Eſchue thou that, for ſoche thing to ſchole is,
Thus oftin wiſe men ben warin by folis:
If thou ſo do thy wit is well bewared;
By his contrary' is every thing declared.

For how might evir ſwetneſſe have be know
To him that nevir taſtid bittirneſſe?
No man ne wot what gladneſſe is I trowe
That nevir was in ſorowe' or ſome diſtreſſe;
Eke white by black, by ſhame eke worthines;
Eche ſet by othir more for othir ſemeth,
As men maie ſene, and ſo the wiſe it demeth.

Sithe thus of two contraries is o lore,
I that in love ſo oftin have aſſayed
Grevaunçis ought to connin well the more
Counſailin the of that thou art diſmaied,
And eke the ne ought not ben ill apaied
Though I deſirin with the for to bere
Thine hevie charge; it ſhall the laſſe the dere.

I wote well that it farid thus by me
As to my brothir Paris an heirdeſſe
Whiche that yclepid was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her hevineſſe;
Ye ſawe the lettir that ſhe wrote I geſſe.
Naie, nevir yet iwis (quod Troilus.)
Now (quod Pandare) herkinith, it was thus.

Phœbus, that firſt found art of medicine,
(Quod ſhe) and coud in every wight'is care
Remedy and rede by herbis he knewe fine;
Yet to himſelf his conning was full bare,
For love had him ſo boundin in a ſnare,
All for the doughter of the King Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his ſorowe bete.

Right ſo fare I; unhappily for me
I love one beſt, and that me ſmertith ſore,
And yet paravinture I can rede the
And nat my ſelf; repreve thou me no more,
I have no cauſe, I wote well ſor to ſore
As doeth an hauke that liſtith for to plaie,
But to thine helpe yet ſomwhat can I faie. 672

And of o thing right ſikir maieſt thou be,
That certain for to dyin in the pain
That I ſhall nevir mo diſcovir the,
Ne by my trouth I kepe nat to reſtrain
The fro thy love, although it were Helein,
That is thy brothir's wife, if I it wiſt;
Be what ſhe be, and love her as the liſt. 679

Therefore as frendfulliche in me aſſure,
And tell me platte what is thine encheſon
And finall cauſe of wo that ye endure,
For doubtith nothing mine entencion
N'as nat to you of reprehenſion
To ſpeke as now, for no wight maie bireve
A man to love till that him liſt to leve. 686

And therefore wetith wel that both ben vicis,
Miſtruſtin all or ellis all beleve;
But well I wote the mene of it no vice is,
As for to truſtin ſome wight is a preve
Of trouth, and ſurthy would I fain remeve
Thy wrong conceipt, and do the ſome wight truſt
Thy wo to tell, and tell me if the luſt. 693

The wise saieth, Wo is him that is alone,
For and he fall he hath none helpe to rise;
And sithe thou hast a felowe tell thy mone,
For this ne is nought certain the next wise
To winnin love, as techin us the wise,
To waile and wepe as Niobe the quene,
Whose teris yet in marble ben isene.

Let be thy weping and thy drerinesse,
And let us lessin wo with othir speche,
So maie thy wofull time semin the lesse;
Delitith nought in wo thy wo to seche,
As doen these folis that ther sorowes eche
With sorowe whan thei han misavinture,
And lustin nought to sechin othir cure.

Men saine, *To wretche is consolacion*
To have an othir felowe in his paine;
That ought well to ben our opinion,
For we bothe thou and I of love do plain;
So full of sorowe am I, sothe to saine,
That certainly as now no more hard grace
Maie sit on me; for why? there is no space.

Yf God wol thou art nought agast of me
Lest I would of thy lady the begile;
Thou wost thy self whom that I love parde,
As I best can, gon sithin longe while,
And sithe thou wost I do it for no wile,
And sithe I am he that thou trustith most,
Tel me somwhat, sens al my wo thou woste.

Yet Troilus for al this no worde ſaide,
But long he laie as ſtill as he ded were,
And aftir this with ſiking he abraide,
And to Pandarus voice he lent his ere,
And up his eien caſt he; and than in fere
Was Pandarus leſte that in a frenſeye
He ſhould yfal, or ellis ſonè deye;
And ſaid, Awake, full wondirliche and ſharpe;
What ſlombriſt thou as in a lethargy?
Or art thou liké an aſſe unto the harpe,
That herith ſoun, whan men the ſtringis ply,
But in his mind of that no melodie
Maie ſinkin him to gladin, for that he
So dull is in his beſtialite?
And with this Pandare of his wordis ſtent,
But Troilus to him no thing anſwerde;
For why? to tellin was nought his entent
Ner to no man for whom that he ſo ferde,
For it is ſaid, *Men makin ofte a yerde*
With which the makir is himſelfe ibeten
In ſondrie manir, as theſe wiſe men treten.
And namèliche in his counſaile telling
That touchith love, that ought to ben ſecre,
For of himſelfe it woll inough out ſpring,
But if that it the bet governid be;
Eke ſomtime it is craſte to ſeme to fle
Fro thing which in effecte men huntin faſte;
Al this gan Troilus in his herte caſte.

But nathèleſſe whan he had herde him crie
Awake, he gan to fikè wondir ſore,
And ſayd, My frende, although that ſtill I lie
I n'am not defe; now pece, and crie no more,
For I have herde thy wordis and thy lore,
But ſuffir me my fortune to bewailen,
For thy proverbis may nought me availen;
Nor othir cure ne canſt thou none for me,
Eke I n'il not ben curid; I woll die:
What knowin I of the Quene Niobe?
Let be thine olde enſamplis, I the prey.
No, frende, (quod Pandarus) therfore I ſey
Suche is delite of folis to bewepe
Ther wo, but to ſekin bote thei ne kepe.
Now know I that there reſon in the faileth;
But tellith me, if I wiſte what ſhe were
For whome that the al miſavinture aileth
Durſte thou truſt that I tolde it in her ere
Thy wo, ſith thou darſt not thy ſelfe for fere,
And her beſought on the to han ſome routhe?
Why nay, (quod he) by God and by my trouthe.
What! not as beſtly (quod Pandarus)
As though mine owne life lay in this nede?
Why no, parde, Sir, (quod this Troilus.)
And why? For that thou ſhouldiſt nevir ſpede.
Woſt thou that well? Ye, that is out of drede,
(Quod Troilus) for all that er ye conne
She wol to no ſuche wrotche as I be wonne.

(Quod Pandarus) Alas! what may this be
That thou diſpairid art thus cauſileſſe?
What! liveth nat thy lady? *Benedicite!*
How woſt thou ſo that thou art gracileſſe?
Suche evil is not alwaie botèleſſe;
Why put not thus impoſſible thy cure,
Sithe thing to come is ofte in avinture? 784

I grauntin well that thou enduriſt wo
As ſharpe as doth he Tityus in hell,
Whoſe ſtomake foulis tirin evir mo
That hightin Vulturis, as bokis tell;
But I may not endurin that thou dwell
In ſo unſkilful an opinion
That of thy wo n'is no curacion; 791

But onis n'ilt thou for thy cowarde herte,
And for thine ire and foliſh wilfulneſſe,
For wantruſt tellin of thy ſorowe' ſmerte,
Ne to thine ownè helpe do beſineſſe
As moche as ſpeke a worde ye more or leſſe,
But lieſt as he that of life nothing retche:
What woman living coude love ſuche a wretche? 798

What may ſhe demin othir of thy dethe,
Yf thou thus die, and ſhe n'ot why it is,
But that for fere is yoldin up thy brethe
For Grekis han beſiegid us iwis?
Lord! which a thanke ſhalt thou have than of this!
Thus wol ſhe ſaine, and al the toune atones,
The wretch is ded, the divel have his bones! 805

Thou maiſte alone here wepe, and crie, and knele,
And love a woman that ſhe wote it nought,
And ſhe wol quite it that thou ſhalt not fele,
Unknow unkiſt, and loſt that is unſought.
What! many a man hath love ful dere abought
Twenty wintir that his lady ne wiſte,
That never yet his ladie's mouthe he kiſte.

What! ſhould he therfore fallin in diſpaire,
Or be recreaunte for his owne tene,
Or ſlain himſelf, all be his ladie faire?
Naie, naie; but er in one be freſh and grene,
To ſerve and love ay his dere hert'is quene,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to ſerve
A thouſande folde more than he can deſerve.

And of that worde toke hede Troilus,
And thought anone what folie he was in,
And how that ſothe him ſayid Pandarus,
That for to ſlaen himſelf might he not win,
But bothe to doen unmanhode and a ſinne,
And of his deth his ladie nought to wite,
For of his wo God wot ſhe knewe full lite.

And with that thought he gan ful ſore to ſike,
And ſaied, Alas! what is me beſt to doe?
To whom Pandare anſwerid, If the like
The beſt is that thou tell me all thy wo,
And have my trouth but if thou find it ſo,
I be thy bote or that it ben full long
To pecis doe me drawe and ſithin hong.

Ye, ſo ſaieſt thou, (quod Troilus) alas!
But God wot it is naught, the rathir ſo
Full harde it were to helpin in this caas,
For well finde I that Fortune is my fo,
Ne all the men that ridin con or go
Maie of her cruill whele the harme withſtond,
For as her liſt ſhe plaieth with fre and bond.

(Quod Pandarus) Than blamiſt thou Fortune
For thou art wroth ye now at erſt I ſe;
Woſt thou not wel that Fortune is commune
To every manir wight in ſome degre?
And yet thou haſt this comfort, lo! parde,
That as her joyis motin ovirgone
So mote her ſorowes paſſin everichone.

For if her whele ſtint any thing to tourne
Than ceſſith ſhe Fortune anone to be;
Now ſith her whele by no waie maie ſojourn
What woſt thou of her mutabilite?
Right as thy ſelf luſt ſhe woll done by the,
Or that ſhe be nought ferre fro thine helping,
Paravinture thou haſt cauſe for to ſing.

And therfore woſt thou what I the beſeche?
Let be thy wo and tourning to the grounde,
For who ſo liſte have heling of his leche
To him bihovith firſt unwrie his wounde;
To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound,
Were it eke for my ſuſtir all thy ſorowe,
By my gode will ſhe ſhould be thine to morowe.

Loke up I saie, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I maie gone about thy nede.
Know I her aught? for my love tell me this,
Than would I hope the rathir for to spede.
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to blede,
For he was hit, and woxe all redde for shame.
Aha! (quod Pandare) here beginnith game.
And with that worde he gan him for to shake,
And saied him thus; Thefe, thou shalt her name tell:
But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake,
As though men should han had him into hel,
And saied, Alas! of all my wo the well
Than is my swetè foe callid Creseide;
And well nigh with that word for fere he deide.
And whan that Pandare herd her namè neven,
Lorde! he was glad, and sayid, Frend so dere,
Now fare a right, for Jov'is name in heven
Love hath beset the well: be of gode chere,
For of gode name, and wisedom, and manere,
She hath inough, and eke of gentilnesse:
If she be faire thou wost thy self I gesse.
Ne nevir seie I a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne gladdir, ne of speche
A frendlier, ne none more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had nede to seche
What for to doen, and all this bet to eche
In honour to as ferre as she may stretche:
A king'is herte semith by her's a wretche.

And forthy loke of gode comforte thou be,
For certainly the firſtè pointe is this
Of noble corage, and wele ordaine the
A man to have pece with himſelfe iwis;
So oughtiſt thou, for nought but gode it is
To lovin wel and in a worthy place;
The ought not to clepin it happe but grace.
And alſo thinke, and therwith gladdin the,
That ſith thy lady vertuous is all,
So foloweth it that there is ſome pite
Amongis all theſe othir in generall,
And for thei ſe that thou in ſpeciall
Requiriſt nought that is ayen her name,
For Vertue ſtretchith not himſelfe to ſhame.
But wel is me that evir I was borne
That thou beſet art in ſo gode a place,
For by my trouth in love I durſt have ſworne
The ſhould nevir have tidde ſo faire a grace;
And woſt you why? for thou were wont to chace
At Love in ſcorne, and for diſpite him call
Saint Idiote, lorde of theſe folis all.
How oftin haſt thou madin thy nice japes?
And ſaied that Lov'is ſervauntes everichone
Of nicete ben very godd'is apes,
And ſome of them would monche ther mete alone
Ligging a bedde, and make 'hem for to grone,
And ſome thou ſaidiſt had a blaunche fevere,
And praidiſt God thei ſhould nevir kevere:

And ſome of 'hem toke on 'hem for the cold
More than inough; ſo ſaidiſt thou full oft,
And ſome han fainid oftin time, and tolde
How that thei wakin whan thei ſlepin ſoft,
And thus thei would have ſet 'hem ſelf aloft,
And nathèleſſe were undir at the laſte:
Thus ſaidiſt thou, and japidiſt full faſte.

Yet ſaidiſt thou that for the morè part
Theſe lovirs wouldin ſpeke in generall,
And thoughtin that it was a ſikir art
For failing for to' affayin ovir all:
Now maie I jape of the if that I ſhall;
But nathèleſſe although that I ſhould deie
Thou ne art none of tho I dare well ſeie.

Now bete thy breſt, and faie to god of Love,
Thy grace, o Lord! for now I me repent
If I miſſpake, for now my ſelf I love;
Thus ſaie with all thine hert in gode entent.
(Quod Troilus) Ah, Lorde! I me conſent,
And praie to the my japis thou foryeve,
And I no more will jape while that I live.

Thou faieſt well, (quod Pandare) and now I hope
That thou the godd'is wrath haſt al apeſed;
And ſithin thou haſt weptin many' a drope,
And ſaid ſoch thing wherwith thy god is pleſed,
Now would God nevir but that thou were eſed,
And thinke well ſhe of whom reſt all thy wo
Hereaſtir maie thy comfort ben alſo.

For thilke ground that berith the wedis wicke
Bereth eke theſe wholſome herbis as full oft,
And nexte to the foule nettle rought and thicke
The roſe ywexith ſote, and ſmothe, and ſoft,
And next the valey is the hill aloft,
And next the derkè night is the glad morowe,
And alſo joie is next the fine of ſorowe.

Now loke that well attempre be thy bridell,
And for the beſt aie ſuffre to the tide,
Or ellis all our labour is on idell:
He haſtith well that wiſely can abide.
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide:
Be luſtie, fre: perſever in ſerviſe,
And all is well if thou werke in this wiſe:

But he that partid is in every place
Is no where whole, as writin clerkis wiſe;
What wondir is if ſoche one have no grace?
Eke woſt thou how it fareth of ſome ſerviſe?
As plant a tre or herbe in ſondrie wiſe,
And on the morowe pull it up as blive,
No wondir is though it maie nevir thrive.

And ſith the god of Love hath the beſtowed
In place digne unto thy worthineſſe,
Stonde faſt, for to a gode port haſt thou rowed,
And of thy ſelf for any hevineſſe
Hope alwaie well; for but if drerineſſe
Or ovirhaſt doe our bothe labour ſhende
I hope of this to makin a gode ende.

And woſt thou why? I am the laſſe afered
Of this matter with my nece for to trete,
For this have I herd ſaie of wiſe and lered,
Was nevir man or woman yet beyete
That was unapt to ſuffre lov'is hete
Celeſtiall, or ellis love of kinde;
Forthy ſome grace I hope in her to finde.

And for to ſpeke of her in ſpeciall,
Her beaute to bethinkin and her youthe,
It ſit her nought to ben celeſtiall
As yet, though that her bothè liſt and kouthe;
And truily it ſit her well right nouthe
A worthie knight to lovin and cherice,
And but ſhe doe I holde it for a vice.

Wherfore I am and woll be aie redy
To painin me to do you this ſervice,
For bothe of you to pleſin; this hope I
Hereaftirwardis, for ye hen bothe wiſe,
And connin counſaile kepe in ſoche a wiſe
That no man ſhall the wiſir of it be;
And ſo we maie ben gladdid allè thre.

And by my trouth I have right now of the
A gode conceit in my wit as I geſſe,
And what it is I woll now that thou ſe;
I think that ſithin Love of his godeneſſe
Hath the convertid out of wickidneſſe
That thou ſhalt ben the beſtè poſt I leve
Of all his laie, and moſte his foin greve.

Enſample why, ſe now theſe gretè clerkes,
That errin aldirmoſte ayen all lawe,
And ben convertid from ther wickid werkes
Through grace of God, that leſt 'hem to him drawe,
Than arne thei folk that han moſt God in awe,
And ſtrengiſt faithid ben I undirſtonde,
And con an errour aldirbeſt withſtonde.
Whan Troilus had herde Pandare aſſented
To ben his helpe in loving of Creſeide
He wext of wo, as who ſaith unturmented,
But hottir wext his love; and than he ſaide
With ſobre chere, as though his herte yplaide,
Now blisfull Venus! helpe er that I ſterve.
Of the, Pandare, I now ſome thanke deſerve.
But, derè frende, how ſhal my wo be leſſe
Till this be done? and, gode now, tell me this,
How wolt thou ſaine of me and my diſtreſſe,
Leſt ſhe be wroth? this drede I moſt iwis,
Or wol not herin al how that it is:
Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her eme ſhe n'il no ſuche thing here.
(Quod Pandarus) Thou haſt a ful grete care
Leſt that the chorle may fal out of the mone.
Why, Lorde! I hate of the the nicè fare;
Why entremete of that thou haſt to done?
For Godd'is love I bidè the a bone;
So let me' alone, and it ſhal be thy beſt.
Why, frende, (quod he) than done right as the leſt:

But herke, Pandare, o worde, for I ne wolde
That thou in me wendiſt ſo grete folie
That to my lady I deſirin ſholde
That touchith harme or any vilanie,
For dredileſſe me were levir to die
Than ſhe of me aught ellis underſtode
But that that might yſownin into gode.
Tho lbugh this Pandare, and anon anſwerde,
And I thy borow'? fie! no wight doth but ſo:
I ne raught not although ſhe ſtode and herde
How that thou ſaieſt: but farewel, I wol go:
Adieu; be glad: God ſpede us bothè two!
Yeve me this labour and this buſineſſe
And of my ſpede be thine al the ſwetnes.
Tho Troilus on knees gan doune to fall,
(And Pandare in his armis hente him faſt)
And ſaide, Nowe ſie upon the Grekis all!
Yet parde God ſhal helpin at the laſt,
And dredileſſe if that my life may laſt,
And God toforne, lo! ſome of 'hem ſhal ſmerte:
And yet me' athinketh that this avaunt m'aſterte.
And now, Pandare, I can no morè ſay,
But thou wiſe, thou woſt thou maiſt: thou art al;
My life, my deth, hole in thine honde I lay;
Helpe me (quod he.) Yes, by my trouth I ſhal.
God yelde the, frende, and this in ſpecial,
(Quod Troilus) that thou me recommaunde
To her that may me to the deth commaunde.

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serve
His ful frendè, tho saide in this manere;
Farwel, and thinke I wol thy thanke deserve,
Have here my trouth, and that thou shalt well here:
And went his way thinking on this matere,
And how he best might her beseeche of grace,
And find a lesure therto and a place.

For every wight that hath a house to found
He rennith nat the werke for to beginne
With rakil honde, but he wol bide a stound,
And sende his hert'is line out fro within,
Thus aldirfirst his purpose for to winne,
As this Pandarus in his hert'is thought
Did cast his werke full wisely er he wrought.

But Troilus lay tho no lengir doun,
But up anon gat upon his stede baie,
And in the felde he playid the lioun;
Wo was that Greke that with him met that daie:
And in the toune his manir tho forthe aie
So godely was, and gat him so in grace,
That eche him loved that lokid in his face.

For he becamin the most frendly wight,
The gentilist, and eke the mostè fre,
The trustyist, and one the bestè knight,
That in his time was or ellis might be:
Ded were his japis and his cruilte,
Ded his high porte and all his manir straunge,
And eche of 'hem gan for a vertue chaunge.

Now let us ſtint of Troilus a ſtounde,
That farith like a man that hurt is ſore,
And is ſomdele of aking of his wounde
Yleſſid wel, but helid no dele more,
And as an eſy pacient the lore
Abite of him that goth about his cure,
And thus he drivith forth his avinture. 1092

Explicit liber primus.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI SECUNDI.

Out of theſe blackè wawis let us ſaile,
O winde, o winde! the wedir ginnith clere,
For in the ſe the bote hath ſuche travaile
Of my conning that unneth I it ſtere:
This ſe clepe I the tempeſtous matere
Of depe diſpaire that Troilus was in;
But now of hope the kalendis begin. 7

O lady mine, that callid art Clio!
Thou be my ſpede fro this forthe, and my Muſe,
To rimè wel this Boke til I have do;
Me nedith here none othir art to uſe;
For why? to every lovir I me' excuſe
That of no ſentiment I this endite,
But out of Latin in my tonge it write. 14

Wherfore I n'il have neithir thanke ne blame
Of all this Worke, but praie you mekily
Disblamith me if any worde be lame,
For as mine auctour sayid so say I;
Eke though I speke of love unfelingly
No wondir is, for it nothinge of newe is:
A blinde man can not judgin wel in hewis. 21

I know eke that in forme of speche is chaunge
Within a thousande yere, and wordis tho
That haddin prise now wondir nice and straunge
Us thinkith 'hem, and yet thei spake 'hem so,
And spedde as wel in love as men now do;
Eke for to winnin love in sondry ages
In sondry londis sondry ben usages. 28

And forthy if it happe in any wise
That here be any lovir in this place
That herkeneth, as the story wol devise,
How Troilus came to his ladie's grace,
And thinkith so n'olde I not love purchace,
Or wondrith on his speche or his doyng,
I n'ot, but it is to me no wondring: 35

For every wight whiche that to Rome ywent
Halt nat o pathe ne alway o manere;
Eke in some londe were al the game yshent
Yf that men farde in love as men don here,
As thus, in opin doyng or in chere,
In visiting, in forme, or laid our lawes;
For thus men saine, *Eche countre hath his lawes.* 42

Eke ſcarſely ben there in this place thre
That have in love ſaid like and done in al,
For to this purpoſe this maie likin the,
And the right nought, yet al is done or ſhal;
Eke ſome men grave in tre, ſome in ſtone wal,
As it betide: but ſith I have begonne,
Mine authour ſhall I folow as I konne. 49

Explicit Proœmium.

INCIPIT LIBER SECUNDUS.

In May, that mothir is of monethis glade,
That the freſhe flouris all, blew, white, and rede,
Ben quicke ayen that wintir ded had made,
And full of baume is fleting every mede,
Whan that Phœbus doth his bright bemis ſpred
Right in the white Bole, right ſo it betidde,
As I ſhal ſinge, on May'is day the thridde, 56

That Pandarus, for all his wiſe ſpeche,
Felte eke his parte of Lov'is ſhottis kene,
That coude he ner ſo well of loving preche
It made his hewe al daie ful oftin grene;
So ſhope it that him fill that day a tene
In love for whiche in wo to bedde he went,
And made er it were day full many'a went. 63

The ſwalow Progne with a ſorowfull lay,
Whan morow come, gan make her waimenting
Why ſhe forſhapin was; and ever lay
Pandare abed halfe in a ſlombering,
Til ſhe ſo nigh him made her waimenting,
How Tereus gan forth her ſuſtir take,
That with the noiſe of her he gan awake,
And to call, and dreſſin him up to riſe,
Remembring him his arande was to done
From Troilus, and eke his grete empriſe,
And caſt, and knew in gode plite was the mone
To done voiage, and toke his way full ſone
Unto his nec'is paleis there beſide:
Now Janus, god of Entre, thou him gide!
Whan he was come unto his nec'is place,
Where is my lady, to her folke (quod he?)
And thei him tolde, and he forthe in gan pace,
And founde two othir ladies ſit and ſhe
Within a pavid parlour, and thei thre
Herdin a maidin 'hem redin the geſte
Of the ſiege of Thebis whilis 'hem leſte.
Madame, quod Pandare, God you ſave and ſe,
With al your boke and al the companie!
Eighe! uncle mine, welcome iwis, (quod ſhe)
And up ſhe roſe, and by the honde in hie
She toke him faſt, and ſayid, This night thrye,
To gode mote it yturne, of you I mette;
And with that word ſhe doun on benche him ſet.

Ye, nece, ye ſhullin farin wel the bet,
If God wol, al this yere, (quod Pandarus)
But I am ſory that I have you let
To herkin of your boke ye praiſin thus:
For Godd'is love what faith it? tel it us;
Is it of love? ſome gode ye may me lere.
Uncle, (quod ſhe) your maiſtreſſe is nat here.

With that thei gonnin laugh, and tho ſhe ſeide,
This romaunce is of Thebis that we rede,
And we have herd how that King Laius deide
Through Oedipus his ſonne, and all the dede;
And here we ſtintin at theſe letters rede
How the biſhop, as the boke can ytell,
Amphiorax, fill through the grounde to hell.

(Quod Pandarus) All this know I my ſelve,
And al th'aſſiege of Thebis and the care,
For herof ben there makid bokis twelve:
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare:
Do' way your barbe, and ſhew your face bare;
Do' way your boke; riſe up and let us daunce,
And let us done to May ſome obſervaunce.

Eighe! God forbid! (quod ſhe.) What! be ye mad?
Is that a widowe's life, ſo God you ſave?
Parde you makin me right ſore adrad;
Ye bene ſo wilde it ſemith as ye rave:
It ſat me wel bettir aie in a cave
To bide, and rede on holy ſaintis lives:
Let maidins gon to daunce and yongè wives.

As evir thrive I (quod this Pandarus)
Yet coulde I tel a thing to don you play.
Now uncle dere (quod ſhe) tellith it us
For Godd'is love: is than th'aſſiege aweie?
I am of Grekis ferde ſo that I deie.
Nay, nay, (quod he) as evir mote I thrive
It is a thing wel bettir than ſuche five.
Ye, holy God! (quod ſhe) what thing is that?
What! bettir than ſuche five? Eighe! nay iwis
For al this world ne can I redin what
It ſhould ybene: ſome jape I trowe it is;
And but your ſelvin tel us what it is
My wit is for to'arede it al to lene:
As helpe me God I n'ot what that ye mene.
And I your borow; ne ner ſhal (quod he)
This thing be tolde to you, as mote I thrive.
And why ſo, uncle mine, why ſo? (quod ſhe.)
By God (quod he) that wol I tel as blive,
For proudir woman is there none on live,
And ye it wiſte, in al the toune of Troie:
I ne jape nat, ſo evir have I joie.
Tho gan ſhe to wondrin more than before
A thouſande folde, and doune her eyin caſt,
For nevir ſithe the time that ſhe was bore
To knowin thing deſirid ſhe ſo faſt,
And with a ſike ſhe ſaid him at the laſt,
Now, uncle mine, I n'il you not diſpleſe,
Nor aſkin that that may do you diſeſe.

So aftir this with many wordis glade
And frendly talis, and with mery chere,
Of this and that thei ſpeke, and gonnin wade
In many an unkouth, glad, and depe, matere,
As frendis done whan thei ben met ifere,
Til ſhe gan aſkin him how Hector ferde,
That was the toun'is wall and Grekis yerde. 154

Ful wel, I thanke it God, ſaide Pandarus,
Save in his arme he hath a litle wounde;
And eke his freſhè brothir Troilus,
To the wiſe worthy Hector the ſecounde,
In whom that every vertue liſte habounde,
As allè trouthe and allè gentilneſſe,
Wiſedome, honour, fredome, and worthineſſe. 161

In gode faith, eme, (quod ſhe) that likith me
Thei farin wel; God ſave 'hem bothè two!
For trewliche I holde it a grete deinte
A king'is ſonnè in armis wel to do,
And be of godè condicions therto,
For grete powir and moral vertue here
Is ſelde iſene in one perſone ifere. 168

In gode faith that is ſothe, (quod Pandarus)
But by my trouth the king hath ſonnis twey,
That is to mene Hector and Troilus,
That certainly though that I ſhould ydey
Thei ben as voide of vicis, dare I ſey,
As any men that livin undir ſonne;
Ther might is wide iknowand what thei conne. 175

Of Hector nedith nothing for to tel;
In all this worlde there n'is a bettir knight
Than he, that is of worthinesse the wel,
And he wel more of vertue hath than might,
This knowith many' a wise and worthy knight:
And the same prise of Troilus I sey:
God helpe me so I know not suche twey. 182

Parde (quod she) of Hector that is sothe,
And of Troilus the same thing trowe I,
For dredilesse men tellith that he dothe
In armis day by day so worthily,
And berith him here at home so gently
To every wight, that al prise hath he
Of them that me were leviste praisid be. 189

Ye say right sothe iwis, (quod Pandarus)
For yesterday who so had with him ben
Mightin have wondrid upon Troilus,
For nevir yet so thicke a swarme of been
Ne flewe as Grekis from him gannin fleen,
And through the felde in every wight'is ere
There was no crie but Troilus is there! 196

Now here now there he huntid 'hem so fast
There n'as but Grekis blode and Troilus;
Now him he hurt, and him al doun he cast;
Aye where he went it was arrayid thus:
He was ther deth, and shelde and life for us,
That as that day ther durst him none withstonde
While that he helde his blody swerde in honde. 203

Therto he is the frendilyiſt man
Of gret eſtate that er I ſawe my live,
And where him liſte the beſt felowſhip can
To ſuche as him thinkith able to thrive.
And with that word tho Pandarus as blive
He toke his leve, and ſaid I wol gon hen.
Nay, blame have I, myne uncle, (quod ſhe) then.

What ailith you to be thus wery ſone,
And namiliche of women wol ye ſo?
Naie, ſittith doune; parde I have to done
With you to ſpeke of wiſdome er ye go;
And every wight that was about 'hem tho
That herdè that gan ferre awaie to ſtonde.
While thei two had al that 'hem liſte in honde.

Whan that her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her eſtate and of her governaunce,
(Quod Pandarus) Now time is that I wende,
But yet I ſay Ariſith, let us daunce
And caſte your widowe's habite to miſchaunce;
What liſte you thus your ſelfe to disfigure,
Sithe you is tidde ſo glad an avinture?

But wel bethought; for love of God (quod ſhe)
Shal I nat wetin what ye mene of this?
No, this thing aſkith leſir tho (quod he)
And eke it me would full muche greve iwis
If I it tolde and ye it toke amis:
Yet were it bette my tonge to holdin ſtil
Than ſay a ſothe that were ayenſt your wil.

For, nece myne, by the goddesse Minerve,
And Jupiter, that makith the thonde'ring,
And by the blisful Venus that I serve,
Ye ben the woman in this world living,
Without in paramours, to my weting,
That I best love, and lothist am to greve;
And that ye wetin wel your selfe I leve.

Iwis, mine uncle, (quod she) graunt mercy!
Your frendship have I foundin evir yet;
I am to no man beholdin trewly
So muche as you, and have so litil quit;
And with the grace of God emforth my wit
As in my gilte I shal you ner offende,
And if I have er this I wol amende.

But for the love of God I you beseche,
As ye be he that I love most and trist,
Let be to me your fremid manir speche,
And saie to me your nece what so you list.
And with that worde her uncle' anon her kist,
And sayid, Gladly, my leve nece so dere!
Take it for gode that I shal say you here.

With that she gan her eyin doune to caste,
And Pandarus to coughe began a lite,
And sayid, Nece, alway, lo! to the laste,
How so it be that some men 'hem delite
With subtil art ther talis for t' endite,
Yet for al that in ther entention
Ther tale is all for some conclusion.

And sithe the end is every tal'is strength,
And this matir is so behovily,
What should I paint or drawin it on length
To you that ben my frende so faithfully?
And with that worde he gan right inwardly
Beholdin her, and lokin in her face,
And saide, On suche a mirrour muche gode grace!
Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Ought harde; or make a processe any while,
She shal no savour have therin but lite,
And trowe I would her in my wil begile;
For tendir wittis wenin al be wile
Wher as thei con nat plainliche undirstond;
Forthy her wit to sounin wol I fonde;
And lokid on her in a besy wise,
And she was ware that he beheide her so:
Ah, Lorde! (quod she) so faste ye me avise,
Sawe ye me ner er now? what, say ye no?
Yes, yes, (quod he) and bet wol er I go;
But by my trouth I thoughtin nowe if ye
Be fortunate, for now men shal it se.
For every wight some godely avinture
Somtime is shape, if he it can receive;
But if that he n'il take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weive,
Lo, neither case nor Fortune him deceive,
But right his owne slouth and wretchidnesse;
And suche a wight is for to blame I gesse.

Gode avinture, o bellè nece! have ye
Ful lightly foundin, and ye conne it take;
And for the love of God and eke of me
Catche it anone, leſt avinture yſlake:
What ſhould I lengir proceſſe of it make?
Yeve me your hond, for in this world is none,
If that you liſt, a wight ſo wel begon.

And ſithe I ſpeke of gode entencioun,
As I to you have tolde wel here beforne,
And love as wel your honour and renoun
As any creture in the worlde iborne,
By al the othis that I have you ſworne
And ye be wrothe therfore, or wene I lie,
Ne ſhal I never ſene you efte with eie.

Beth nat agaſte, ne quakith nat; wherto?
Ne chaungith nat for ferè ſo your hewe,
For hardily the worſt of this is do;
And though my tale as now be to you newe,
Yet truſt alwaie ye ſhal me findin trewe;
And were it thing that me thought unfitting
To you ne would I no ſuch talis bring.

Nowe, my gode eme, for Godd'is love I pray
(Quod ſhe) come of and tel me what it is,
For bothe I am agaſt what ye wol ſay,
And eke me longith it to wit iwis,
For whethir it be wel or be amis
Say on; let me not in this fere ydwel.
So wol I done: now herkenith I ſhal tel.

Now nece mine, the king is owne dere sonne,
The gode, the wise, the worthy, fresh and fre,
Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne,
The noble Troilus, so lovith the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane ybe.
Lo! here is al: what shouldin I more sey?
Doth what you lift to make him live or dey.
But if ye let him dye I wol sterven,
Have here my trouthe, nece, I n'il not lien,
Al should I with this knife my throte kervin:
With that the teris burst out of his eyen,
And saide, If that ye done us both to dien
Thus giltilesse, than have ye fisshid faire;
What mendeth it you though that we both apaire?
Alas! he whiche that is my lorde so dere,
That trewe man, that noble gentle knight,
That naught desirith but your frendly chere,
I se him dyin, there he goth upright,
And hastith him with al his fulle might
For to ben slaine, if his fortune assente:
Alas that God you suche a beaute sente!
If it be so that ye so cruil be
That of his deth you liftith nought to retch,
That is so trewe and worthy as we se,
No more than of a japir or a wretch,
If ye be suche, your beaute may nat stretch
To make amendes of so cruill a dede:
Avisement is gode before the nede.

Wo worthe the faire gemme that is vertuleſſe!
Wo worthe that herbe alſo that doth no bote!
Wo worth the beaute that is routheleſſe!
Wo worth that wight that trede eche undir fote!
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote,
If therwithal in you ne be no routhe
Than is it harme ye livin, by my trouthe.

And alſo thinke wel that this is no gaude,
For me were levir thou, and I, and he,
Were hongid than that I ſhould ben his baude,
As high as men might on us al ſe:
I am thine eme; the ſhame were unto me
As wel as the if that I ſhould aſſent
Through mine abet that he thine honour ſhent.

Now undirſtonde, for I you nought require
To binde you to him thorough no beheſt
Save one, that ye makin him bettir chere
Than ye han don er this and more feſte,
So that his life be ſavid at the leſte.
This al and ſome is plainly our entente:
God helpe me ſo I nevir othir mente.

Lo! this requeſt is nought but ſkil iwis,
Ne doute of reſon parde is there none:
I ſet the worſt that ye dredin; this is,
Men would wondir to ſene him come and gone:
Ther ayeniſt anſwere I thus anone,
That every wight, but he be fole of kinde,
Wol deme it love of frendſhip in his minde.

What! who wol demin though he se a man
To temple gon that he th' imagis eteth?
Thinke eke howe wel and wisely that he can
Governe himselfe, that he nothing foryeteth,
That whan he cometh he pris and thonk him geteth;
And eke therto he shal come here so selde
What force were it though all the toun behelde? 378

Suche love of frendes reignith in al this toun:
And wrie you in that mantil evirmo;
And God so wis be my salvacioun
As I have saide your best is to do so.
But, gode nece, alway for to stint his wo
So let your daungir sugrid ben alite
That of his deth ye be not al to wite. 385

Creseide, which that herde him in this wise,
Thought I shal sele what he menith iwis.
Now eme, (quod she) what wouldin ye devise?
What is your rede that I should done of this?
That is wel said, quod he: certaine best is
That ye him love aien for his loving,
As love for love is skilful guerdoning. 392

Thinke eke how elde wallith every hour
In eche of you a part of your beaute,
And therfore er that age doth the devour
Go love, for olde there woll no wight love the.
Let this proverbe a lore unto you be,
To late iwarè, quod Beaute, whan it passe,
And elde ydauntith daungir at the lasse. 399

The king's fole is wont to crie aloude,
Whan that he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
So longè mote ye livin, and all proude,
Til crow's fete growin undir your eie,
And ſende you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may ſe your face a morrowe:
Nece, I bid him wiſhin you no more ſorowe.

With this he ſtinte, and caſt adoune the hed,
And ſhe began to breſt and wepe anone,
And ſaide, Alas for wo! why n'ere I ded?
For of this world the faith it al agone:
Alas! what ſhuldin ſtraunge unto me done
When he that for my beſtè frende I wende
Redith me love who ſhulde it me defende?

Alas! I would have truſtid doutiles
That if that I through my diſavinture
Had lovid eithir him or Achilles,
Hector, or any othir manir creture,
Ye n'old have had no mercy ne meſure
On me, but alwaie had me in repreve:
This falſe worlde, alas! who may it leve?

What! is this al the joy and al the feſt?
Is this your rede? is this my blisful caas?
Is this the very mede of your beheſt?
Is this al paintid proceſſe ſaid (alas!)
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredeful caſe for me purvey,
For ſo aſtonied am I that I dey.

With that ſhe gan ful forowfully to ſike:
Ah! may it be no bet? (Quod Pandarus)
By God I ſhall no more come here this weke,
And God to-forne, that am miſtruſtid thus;
I ſe wel now ye ſettin lite of us
Or of our deth, alas! I, woful wretche,
Might he yet live of me were nought to retche.
O cruil god of Deth, diſpitous Marte!
O Furies thre of hel! on you I crie,
So let me ner out of this houſe departe
Yf that I ment on harme or vilanie:
But ſithe I ſe my lorde mote nedis die,
And I with him, here I me ſhrive, and ſey,
That wickidly ye done us bothe to dey.
But ſithe it likith you that I be ded,
By Neptunus, that god is of the Se,
Fro this forthe ſhal I nevir etin bred
Til that I mine own hert's blode maie ſe,
For certaine I wol die as ſone as he:
And up he ſterte, and on his way he raught,
Til ſhe againe him by the lappe ycaught.
Creſeidè, which that wel nigh ſtarfe for fere,
So as ſhe was aye the moſt ferefull wight
That mightin be, and herde eke with her ere,
And ſawe the ſorowful erneſt of the knight,
And in his prayir ſawe eke non unright,
And for the harme eke that might fallin more,
She gan to rewe, and dredde her wondir ſore:

And thus ſhe thought; unhappis fallin thicke
Al day for love, and in ſuche manir caas
As men ben cruill in 'hem ſelfe and wicke;
And if this man ſle here himſelfe, alas!
In my preſence, it n'il be no ſolas:
What men would of it deme I can nat ſay;
It nedith me full ſlighly for to play.

And with a ſorowful ſighe ſhe ſaide thrie,
Ah, Lorde! me is betidde a ſory chaunce,
For mine eſtate lieth in a jeopardie,
And eke mine em'is life lieth in balaunce;
But nathèleſſe with Godd'is govirnaunce
I ſhal ſo done mine honour ſhal I kepe,
And eke his life, and ſtintin for to wepe.

Of barmis two the leſſe is for to cheſe;
Yet had I levir makin him gode chere
In honour than mine em'is life to leſe;
Ye ſaine ye nothing ellis me requere.
No, wis, (quod he) mine owne nece ſo dere!
Now wel, (quod ſhe) and I wol don my paine;
I ſhal mine herte ayen my luſt conſtraine.

But that I n'il nat holdin him in honde,
Ne love a man, that can I naught ne may,
Ayenſt my wil, but ellis wol I fonde,
Mine honour ſave, pleſe him fro day to day;
Therto n'olde I not onis have ſaide nay
But that I dredde as in my fantaſie;
But *Ceſſe cauſe and aie ceſſith maladie.*

But here I make a proteſtacion
That in this proceſſe if ye depir go
That certainly for no ſalvacion
Of you, though that ye ſtervin bothè two,
Though al the worldè on o day be my fo,
Ne ſhal I ner on him have othir routhe.
I graunt it wel (quod Pandare) by my trouthe.
But maie I truſtin well to you (quod he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holdin truely unto me?
Ye, doutileſs, quod ſhe, myne uncle dere!
Ne that I ſhall have cauſe in this matere
(Quod he) to plain or aftir you to preche?
Why no, parde; what nedith morè ſpeche!
Tho ſellin thei in othir talis glade,
Till at the laſt, O gode eme! (quod ſhe tho)
For love of God, whiche that us bothe ymade,
Telle me how firſt ye wiſtin of his wo;
Wot noh of it but ye? He ſayid No.
Can he well ſpeke of love, (quod ſhe) I preie?
Tell me, for I the bet ſhall me purveie.
Tho Pandarus a litil gan to ſmile,
And ſayid, By my trouth I ſhall now tell:
This othir daie, nat gon full longè while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I well halfe a daie to dwell,
Right for to ſpekin of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekis mightin diſavaunce:

Sone after that begone we for to lepe
And caſtin with our dartis to and fro,
Till at the laſt he ſayid he would ſlepe,
And on the graſſe adoune he laied him tho;
And I aſtir gan romin to and fro,
Till that I herd, as I walkid alone,
How he began full wofully to grone.

Tho gan I ſtalke him full ſoftly behinde,
And ſikirly, the ſothè for to ſaine,
As I can clepe ayen now to my minde,
Right thus to Love he gan him for to plaine:
He ſayid, Lorde, have routh upon my pain;
All have I ben rebell in mine entent,
Now *(mea culpa)* Lorde, I me repent.

O God! that at thy diſpoſicion
Lediſt forth the fine by juſt purveiaunce
Of every wight, my lowe confeſſion
Accept in gre, and ſende me ſoche penaunce
As likith the; put from me diſperaunce,
That maie my ghoſt departe alwaie fro the:
Thou be my ſhilde for thy benignite.

For certis, Lorde, ſo ſore hath ſhe me wounded
That ſtode in blacke with loking of her eyen,
That to mine hert'is botome it is founded,
Through which I wot that I muſt nedis dien;
This is the worſt, I dare me nought bewrien,
And well the hotir ben the gledis rede
That men 'hem wrien with aſhin pale and ded.

With that he ſmote his hedde adoune anone,
And gan to muttre I nat what truely,
And I with that gan ſtill awaie to gone,
And lete thereof as nothing wiſt had I,
And come again anon and ſtode him by,
And ſaied, Awake, ye ſlepin all to long;
It ſemith me nought that Love doth you wrong
That ſlepin ſo that no man maie you wake;
Who ſeie evir er this ſo dull a man?
Ye, frende, (quod he) doe ye your hedd'is ake
For love, and let me livin as I can:
But though that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as freſhe a countenaunce
As though he ſhould have led the newè daunce.
This paſſid forth till now this othir daie
It fell that I come roming all alone
Into his chambre, and founde how that he laie
Upon his bedde; but man ſo ſorè grone
Ne herd I nevir; and what was his mone
Ne wiſt I nought, for as I was comming
All ſodainly he left his complaining,
Of whiche I toke ſomwhat ſuſpection,
And nere I come, and founde him wepè ſore;
And God ſo wiſe be my ſalvacion
As I had nevir routhe of nothing more,
For neithir with engine ne with no lore
Unnethis might I fro the deth him kepe,
That yet fele I mine hertè for him wepe.

And God wot nevir ſith that I was borne
Was I ſo buſie no man for to preche,
Ne nevir was to wight ſo depe yſworne,
Er he me told who might yben his leche;
But not to you reherſin al his ſpeche,
Or all his wofull wordis for to ſowne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll ſe me ſwone;
But for to ſave his life, and ellis nought,
And to non harm of you, thus am I driven;
And for the love of God that us hath wrought
Soche chere him doth that he and I maie liven.
Now have I plat to you mine herte yſhriven,
And ſith ye wote that mine entent is clene
Take hede thereof, for none evill I mene.
And right gode thrift I pray to God have ye
That han ſoche one icaught withoutin net;
And be ye wiſe, as ye be faire to ſe;
Well in the ring than is the rubie ſet:
There werin nevir two ſo well imet
Whan ye ben his all whole as he is your:
The mighty God us grant to ſe that hour!
Naie, thereof ſpake I nat. A ha! (quod ſhe)
As helpe me God ye ſhendin every dele.
A, mercie, derè nece! anon (quod he)
What ſo I ſpake I ment it nought but wele,
By Mars the god that helmid is of ſtele:
Now beth not wroth, my blode, my necè dere!
Now well (quod ſhe) foryevin be it here.

With this he toke his leve, and home he went:
Ye, Lorde, how he was glad and well bigon!
Creſeide aroſe, no lengir ſhe ne ſtent,
But ſtreight into her cloſet went anon,
And ſet her doune as ſtill as any ſtone,
And every worde gan up and doune to winde
That he had ſaied as it came her to minde.

And woxe ſomedele aſtonied in her thought
Right for the newè caſe; but whan that ſhe
Was full aviſid, tho found ſhe right nought
Of perill why that ſhe oughte aferde be,
For man mai love of poſſibilite
A woman ſo that his herte maie to breſt,
And ſhe nat love ayen but if her leſt.

But as ſhe ſat alone and thoughtè thus,
In field aroſe a ſkirmiſh all without,
And men cried in the ſtretè, Se! Troilus
Hath right now put to flight the Grekis rout:
With that gonne all her meine for to ſhout,
A! go we ſe; caſt up the gatis wide,
For through this ſtrete he mote to paleis ride,

For othir waie is fro the yatis none
Of Dardanus, there opin is the cheine:
With that come he and all his folke anone
An eſie pace riding in routis tweine,
Right as his happie daie was (ſothe to ſeine)
For whiche men ſaith maie not diſtourbid be
That ſhall betidin of neceſſite.

This Troilus ſat on his baiè ſtede
All armid ſave his hedde full richily,
And woundid was his horſe, and gan to blede,
On whiche he rode a pace full ſoftily;
But ſoche a knightly ſight, lo! truily
As was on him was nat withoutin faile
To loke on Mars, that god is of Battaile.

So like a man of armis and a knight
He was to ſene, fulfilled of high proweſſe,
For bothe he had a bodie and a might
To doen that thing as well as hardineſſe,
And eke to ſene him in his gerè dreſſe,
So freſhe, ſo yong, ſo weldy, ſemid he,
It was an hevin on him for to ſe.

His helme to hewin was in twentie places,
That by a tiſſue hong his backe behinde,
His ſhelde to daſhed with ſwerdis and with maces,
In whiche men might many an arowe finde
That thirlid had both horne, and nerfe, and rinde;
And aie the peple cried, Here cometh our joie,
And next his brothir holdir up of Troie!

For which he wext a little redde for ſhame
When he ſo herd the peple on him crien,
That to beholde it was a noble game
How ſobirliche he caſt adoune his eyen.
Creſeide anone gan all his chere eſpien,
And let it in her herte ſo ſoftly ſinke
That to her ſelf ſhe ſayed, Ho! give me drinke.

For of her ownè thought ſhe woxe al redde,
Remembring her right thus, lo! this is he
Whiche that mine uncle ſwereth he mote be dedde
But I on him have mercie and pite:
And with that ilkè thought for pure ſhame ſhe
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as faſt,
While he and all the peple forth by paſt:
And gan to caſt and rollin up and doun
Within her thought his excellent proweſſe,
And his eſtate, and alſo his renoun,
His witte, his ſhape, and eke his gentilneſſe;
But moſte her favour was for his diſtreſſe
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
To ſlaen ſoche one, if that he mentè trouth.
Now might ſome envious wight janglin thus,
This was a ſodain love; how might it be
That ſhe ſo lightly lovid Troilus?
Right at the firſt ſight of him? Yea, parde.
Now whoſo ſaied ſo mote he nevir the,
For every thing a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought withoutin any drede.
For I ſaie nat that ſhe ſo ſodainly
Yaſe him her love, but that ſhe gan encline
To liken' him tho, and I have told you why;
And aftir that his manhode and his pine
Made love within her hertè for to mine,
For whiche by proceſſe and by gode ſervice
He wanne her love, and in no ſodain wiſe.

And alſo blisful Venus wele arayed
Satte in her ſevinth houſe of hevin tho
Diſpoſid wele, and with aſpectis payed,
To helpin ſely Troylus of his wo;
And, ſothe to ſayne, ſhe n'as nat all a foe
To Troylus in hys natyvyte,
God wote that wele the ſonir ſpedin he.
Now let us ſtinte of Troilus a throwe,
That ridith forth, and let us tournè faſt
Unto Creſeide, that heng her hedde full lowe
There as ſhe ſatte alone, and gan to caſt
Wheron ſhe would apoinct her at the laſt,
If it ſo were her eme ne would yceſſe
For Troilus upon her for to preſſe.
And, Lorde! ſo ſhe gan in her thought argue
In this matter of whiche I have you told,
And what to doen beſt were, and what eſchue,
That plitid ſhe ful oft in many fold;
Now was her hertè warme now was it cold;
And what ſhe thought of ſomwhat ſhal I write
As mine auchour liſtith to me t' endite.
She thought wele firſt that Troilus perſon
She knewe by ſight, and eke his gentilneſſe,
And thus ſhe ſaid, All were it nought to doen
To graunt him love, yet for his worthineſſe
It wer honor with plaie and with gladneſſe
In honeſte with ſuche a lorde to dele
For mine eſtate and alſo for his hele.

Eke well wote I my king'is fonne is he,
And ſith he hath to ſe me ſoche delite,
If I would uttirliche his ſight yflie
Par'aventure he might have me in diſpite,
Thorough whiche I might ſtondin in worſe plite;
Now were I not wiſe me hate to purchace,
Withoutin nede, there I maie ſtand in grace.

In every thing I wot there lieth meſure;
For though a man forbiddith dronkineſſe,
He nought forbiddith that every creture
Be drinkileſſe for alwaie, as I geſſe;
Eke ſithe I wot for me is his diſtreſſe
I ne ought not for that thing him diſpiſe,
Sith it is ſo he menith in gode wiſe.

And eke I knowe of longè time agone
His thewis gode, and that he n'is not nice,
No vantour ſaine men certain he is none,
To wiſe is he to doen ſo grete a vice,
Ne als I n'ill him nevir ſo cheriee
That he ſhall make avaunt by juſtè cauſe;
He ſhall me nevir binde in ſoche a clauſe.

Now ſet a caſe, the hardiſt is iwis,
Men mightin demin that he lovith me;
What diſhonour were it unto me this?
Maie I him let of that? why naie, parde;
I knowe alſo, and alwaie here and ſe,
Men lovin women al this toune about;
Be thei the wers? why naie, withoutin doubt.

I thinke eke how he worthy is to have
Of all this noble toune the thriftyiſt
That woman is, if ſhe her honour ſave,
For out and out he is the worthyiſt
Save only Hector, whiche that is the beſt;
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure:
But ſoche is love, and eke mine avinture.

Ne me to love a wondir is it nought,
For well wote I my ſelf, ſo God me ſpede,
All woll I that no man wiſt of this thought,
I am one of the fairiſt out of drede,
And godelyiſt, who ſo that takith hede,
And ſo men ſaine, in all the toune of Troie;
What wondir is though he of me have joie?

I am mine ownè woman, well at eſe,
I thanke it God, as aftir mine eſtate,
Right yong, and ſtond untied in luſtie leſe,
Withoutin jelouſie, and ſoche debate;
Shall no huſbonde ſaine unto me Checke mate,
For eithir thei ben full of jelouſie,
Or maiſtirfull, or lovin novelrie.

What ſhall I doen? to what fine live I thus?
Shall I not love in caſe if that me leſt?
What? pardieux I am not religious;
And though that I mine hertè ſet at reſt
Upon this knight, that is the worthieſt,
And kepe alwaie mine honor and my name,
By all right it maie doe to me no ſhame.

But right as whan the ſunnè ſhinith bright
In March, that chaungith oftintime his face,
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight
Whiche ovirſprat the ſunne as for a ſpace,
A cloudy thought gan through her ſoulè pace
That ovirſpradde her brightè thoughtis all,
So that for fere almoſte ſhe gan to fall.

That thought was this; Alas! ſith I am ſre
Should I now love and put in jeopardie
My ſikirneſſe, and thrallin liberte?
Alas! how durſt I thinkin that folie?
Maie I not well in othir folke aſpie
Ther dredfull joie, ther conſtreint and ther pain?
Ther lovith non that ne hath why to plain.

For love is yet the moſtè ſtormie life
Right of himſelf that evir was begonne,
For ever ſome miſtruſt or ſome nice ſtrife
There is in love, ſome cloud ovir the ſunne;
Thereto we wretchid women nothing conne
Whan us is wo but wepe, and ſit, and thinke:
Our wretche is this, our ownè wo to drinke.

Alſo theſe wickid tonguis ben ſo preſt
To ſpeke us harme, eke men ben ſo untrue,
That right anon as ceſſid is ther leſt
So ceſſith love, and forth to love anewe:
But *Harme idoe is doen, who ſo it rue;*
For though theſe men for love 'hem firſt to rende,
Full ſharp beginning brekith oft at ende.

How oftin time hath it yknowin ben
The treſon that to women hath be doe!
To what fine is ſoche love I can not ſene,
Or where becomith it whan it is go
There is no wight that wote I trowe ſo;
Wher it becometh lo no wight on it ſporneth;
That erſt was nothing into nothing turneth. 798

How buſie (if I love) eke muſt I be
To pleſin 'hem that jangle' of love and deme,
And coyen 'hem that thei ſaie no harm of me!
For though there be no cauſe yet 'hem may ſeme
Al be for harme that folke ther frendis queme;
And who maie ſtoppin every wickid tong
Or ſoune of bellis while that thei ben rong? 805

And after that her thought gan for to clere,
And ſaied, *He whiche that nothing undirtaketh*
Nothing achewith, be him loth or dere;
And with an othir thought her hert yquaketh;
Than ſlepith hope, and aftir drede awaketh;
Now hote now cold: but thus betwixin twey
She rift her up and went her for to pley. 812

Adoune the ſtaire anon right tho ſhe went
Into her gardine, with her neeis thre,
And up and doun thei madin many' a went
Flexippe' and ſhe, Tarbe' and Antigone,
To playin, that it joie was to ſe,
And othir of her women a grete rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about. 819

This yerde was large, and railed al the aleyes,
And ſhadowed wel with blos'omy bowis grene,
And benchid newe, and ſondid all the weyes,
In whiche ſhe walkith arme in arme betwene,
Till at the laſt Antigone the ſhene
Gan on a Trojan ſong to ſingin clere,
That it an hevin was her voice to here.
She faied, O Love! to whom I have and ſhal
Ben humble ſubject, true in mine entent,
As I beſt can to you, Lorde, yeve I all
For evirmore mine hert'is love to rent,
For nevir yet thy grace to no wight ſent
So blisfull cauſe as me, my life to lede
In allè jóie and ſuretie out of drede.
The blisfull God hath me ſo well beſet
In love iwis, that all that berith life
Imaginin ne could how to be bet;
For, Lorde, withoutin jelouſie or ſtrife
I love one whiche that moſte is ententife
To ſervin well, unwerily' or unſained,
That evir was, and leſt with harme diſtained,
As he that is the well of worthineſſe,
Of trouth the ground, mirrour of godelihedde,
Of wit Apollo, ſtone of ſikirneſſe,
Of virtue rote, of luſte findir and hedde,
Thorough whiche is all ſorowe fro me dedde:
Iwis I love him beſt, ſo doeth he me;
Now gode thrift have he where ſo er he be!

Whom ſhould I thankin but you, god of Love,
Of all this bliſſe in whiche to bathe I ginne?
And thankid be ye, Lorde, for that I love:
This is the rightè life that I am inne,
To flemin all manir of vice and ſinne;
This doeth me ſo to vertue for to' entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

And who that ſaieth that for to love is vice
Or thraldome, though he fele in it diſtreſſe,
He either is envious or right nice,
Or is unmightie for his ſhreudèneſſe
To lovin; for ſoche manir folke I geſſe
Diffamin Love as nothing of him knowe;
They ſpeke of Love, but nevir bent his bowe.

What is the ſunnè worſe of his kinde right
Though that a man for febleſſe of his eyen
Maie not endure on it to ſe for bright?
Or love the worſe that wretchis on it crien?
No wele is worth that maie no ſorowe drien;
And forthy, *Who that hath an hedde of verre*
Fro caſt of ſtonis ware him in the werre.

But I with al mine herte and al my might,
As I have ſaied, woll love unto my laſt
My owne dere herte, and all mine ownè knight,
In whiche mine herte ygrowin is ſo faſt,
And his in me, that it ſhall evir laſt:
All did I dred at firſt to love begin
Now wote I well there is no pain therein.

And of her ſong right with that worde ſhe ſtent,
And therewithall, Now nece (quod Creſeide)
Who made this ſong now with ſo gode entent?
Antigone anſwerde anon, and ſaide,
Madame, iwis it was the godelyiſt maide,
Of grete eſtate, in all the toune of Troie,
Who led her life in moſte honour and joie. 882

Forſothe ſo it yſemith by her ſong,
Quod tho Creſeide, and gan therwith to ſike,
And ſayid, Lorde! is there ſoche bliſſe emong
Theſe lovirs, as thei can ſo faire endite?
Ye, wiſſe, quod freſhe Antigone the white,
For all the folke that have or ben on live
Ne couldin well the bliſſe of love diſcrive. 889

But wenin ye that every wretche wote
The parfite bliſſe of love? why naie, iwis;
Thei wenin all be love if one be hote;
Do' waie, do' waie! thei wote nothing of this:
Men mote aſkin of ſainctis if it is
Ought faire in heven? and why? for thei can tell;
And aſkin fendes if it be foule in hell? 896

Creſeide unto the purpoſe nought anſwerde,
But ſaied, Iwis it woll be night as faſte;
But every worde whiche that ſhe of her herde
She gan to printin in her herte faſte,
And aie gan love her laſſe for to agaſte
Than' it did erſt, and ſinkin in her herte,
That ſhe wax ſomwhat able to converte. 903

The day'is honour and the heven'is eye,
The night'is foe, all this clepe I the ſonne,
Gan weſtrin faſt, and dounward for to wrie,
As he that had his day'is courſe ironne,
And white thingis woxin all dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and ſterris for to' apere,
That ſhe and all her ſolke in went ifere. 918

So whan it likid her to gon to reſte,
And voidid werin thei that voidin ought,
She ſayid, that to ſlepin well her leſte;
Her women ſone unto her bedde her brought:
Whan al was huſh't than laie ſhe ſtil and thought
Of all this thing the manir and the wiſe;
Reherce it nedith not, for ye ben wiſe. 917

A nightingale upon a cedre grene
Undir the chambir wall there as ſhe laie
Full loude yſong ayen the monè ſhene,
Par'aventure in his bird'is wiſe a laie
Of love, that made her herte freſhe and gaie;
That herkenid ſhe ſo long in gode entent
Till at the laſt the deddè ſlepe her hent. 924

And as ſhe ſlept anon right tho her met
How that an egle, fethered white as bone,
Undir her breſt his longè clawis ſet,
And out her herte he rent, and that anon,
And did his herte into her breſt to gon,
Of which ſhe nought agroſe ne nothing ſmert,
And forthe he flyith with herte leſt for hert. 931

Now let her ſlepe, and we our talis holde
Of Troilus, that is to paleis ridden
Fro the ſcarmiſhe of the whiche I have tolde,
And in his chambir ſate and hath abidden
Til two or thre of his meſſangirs yeden
For Pandarus, and ſought in him full faſt
Til thei him found, and brought him at the laſt. 938

This Pandarus came leping in at ones,
And ſayid thus, Who hath ben well ibete
To daie with ſwerdis and with ſlongè ſtones
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete?
And gan to jape, and ſaied, Lorde how ye ſwete!
But riſe and let us ſoupe and go to reſte:
And he anſwerde him, Doe we as the leſte. 945

With all the haſt godèly as thei might
Thei ſped 'hem fro the ſoupir and to bedde,
And every wight out at the dore him dight,
And wher' him liſt upon his waie he ſped,
But Troilus thought that his hertè bledde
For wo til that he herdè ſome tiding,
And ſayid, Frende, ſhall I now wepe or ſing? 952

(Quod Pandarus) Be ſtill and let me ſlepe,
And doe' on thy hode, thine nedis ſpedde ybe,
And cheſe if thou wolt ſing, or daunce, or lepe:
At ſhort wordis, thou ſhalt trowe all by me,
For, Sir, my nece woll doin well by the,
And love the beſt, by God and by my trothe,
But lacke of purſuite marre it in thy ſlothe. 959

For thus ferforth I have thy werke begon
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
Her love of frendſhip haye I to the won,
And therto hath ſhe laid her faith to borow;
Algate o fote is hameled of thy ſorowe:
What ſhould I lengir ſermon of it holde?
As ye have herd before all he him tolde.

But right as flouris through the cold of night
Iclofid ſtoupin in ther ſtalkis lowe,
Redreſſin 'hem ayen the ſunnè bright,
And ſpredin in ther kindè courſe by rowe,
Right ſo gan tho his eyin up to throwe
This Troilus, and ſaied, O Venus dere!
Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here.

And to Pandare he held up both his hondes,
And ſayid, Lorde, all thine be that I have,
For I am whole, and broſtin ben my bondes:
A thouſande Troyis who ſo that me yave
Eche aſtir othir, God ſo wis me ſave,
Ne might not me ſo gladin: lo! mine hert
It ſpredith ſo for joie it woll to ſterte.

But, Lorde, how ſhall I doen? how ſhall I liven?
Whan ſhall I next my own dere herte yſe?
How ſhall this longè time awaie be driven
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me?
Thou maieſt anſwere, Abide, abide; but *He*
That hangith by the necke, the ſothe to ſaine,
In grete diſeſe abidith for the paine.

All esily now, for the love of Marte,
(Quod Pandarus) for every thing hath time,
So long abide till that the night departe;
For all so sikir as thou lieſt here by me,
And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
And for thy werke somwhat as I shall saie,
Or on some othir wight this charge laie.

For parde God wot I have evir yet
Ben redy the to serve, and to this night
Have I not fainid, but emforthe my wit
Doen all thy lust, and shal with al my might;
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright;
And if thou n'ilte, wite all thy selfe the care:
On me is nought along thine evill fare.

I wote well that thou wisir art than I
A thousande folde; but if I were as thou,
God helpe me so, as I would uttirly
Right of mine owne honde write to her now
A lettir, in whiche I would telle her how
I farde amisse, and her beseche of routh:
Now helpe thy self, and leve it for no slouth.

And I my self shall therwith to her gon,
And whan thou woſt that I am with her there
Worthe thou up on a courſir right anon,
Ye hardily, and that in thy beſt gere,
And ride forth by the place as naught ne were,
And thou shalt finde us (if I maie) sitting
At some windowe into the strete loking.

And if the liſt than maieſt thou us ſalue,
And upon me make thou thy countenaunce,
But by thy life beware, and faſt eſchue
To tarien ought; God ſhild us fro miſchaunce!
Ride forth thy waie and hold thy govirnaunce;
And we ſhall ſpeke of the ſomwhat I trow,
Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eris glow.

Touching thy lettir, thou are wiſe inough;
I wot thou n'ilte it deignèliche endite,
As make it with theſe argumentis tough,
Ne ſcriven-like, or craftily it write;
Beblotte it with thy teris eke alite,
And if thou write a godely worde all ſoft,
Though it be gode reherce it not to oft:

For though that the beſt harpour upon live
Would on the beſtè ſounid jolly harpe
That evir was with all his fingirs five
Touche aie o ſtring, or aie o warble harpe,
Were his nailis poinctid nevir ſo ſharpe,
It ſhuldè makin every wight to dull
To here his gle and of his ſtrokis full.

Ne jombre no diſcordaunt thing iſere,
As thus, to uſin termis of phiſike;
In lov'is termis holde of thy matere
The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like;
For if a paintir would ypainte a pike
With aſſ'is fete, and heddid as an ape,
It cordith not, ſo were it but a jape.

This counſaile likid well to Troilus,
But as a dredfull lovir he ſaied this;
Alas! my derè brothir Pandarus!
I am aſhamid for to write iwis,
Leſt of mine ignorance I ſaied amis,
Or that ſhe n'olde it for diſpite receve;
Than wer I ded, there might it nothing weve.

To that Pandare anſwerid, If the leſt
Doe that I ſaie, and let me therewith gon,
For by that Lorde that formid eſt and weſt
I hope of it to bring anſwere anon
Right of her hond, and if that thou n'ilte non
Let be, and ſorie mote he ben his live
Ayenſt thy luſt that helpith the to thrive.

(Quod Troilus) Depardieux I aſſent;
Sithe that the liſte I woll ariſe and write,
And blisfull God praie I with gode entent
The viage and lettir I ſhall endite
So ſpede it, and thou Minerva the White
Yeve thou me witte my lettir to deviſe;
And ſet him doun, and wrote right in this wiſe.

Firſt he gan her his right ladie to call,
His hert'is life, his luſt, his ſorowe's leche,
His bliſſe, and eche theſe othir termis all
That in ſoche caſe ye lovirs allè ſeche,
And in full humble wiſe, as in his ſpeche,
He gan him recommaunde unto her grace;
To tell all how it aſkith mokill ſpace.

And aftir this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wrothe though he of his folie
So hardie was to her to write, and ſaied
That love it made, or ellis muſt he die,
And pitouſly gan mercie for to crie;
And aftir that he ſaied (and lied full loude)
Himſelf was little worthe, and laſſe he coud,
And that ſhe would have his conning excuſed,
That litil was; and eke he dradde her ſo,
And his unworthineſſe aie he accuſed;
And aftir that than gan he tel his wo;
But that was endèleſſe withoutin ho;
And ſaid, he would in trouth alway him holde,
And redde it ovre', and gan the lettre folde:
And with his ſaltè teris gan he bathe
The ruby in his ſignet, and it ſette
Upon the wexe delivirliche and rathe,
Therwith a thouſande timis er he lette
He kiſte the lettre whan he had it ſhette,
And ſaide, Lettre, a blisful deſtine
The ſhapin is; my lady ſhal the ſe!
This Pandare toke the lettre, and betime
A morowe to his nec'is paleis ſterte,
And faſt he ſwore that it was paſſid prime,
And gan to jape, and ſaide, Iwis mine herte
So freſhe it is (although it ſore ſmerte)
I maie nat ſlepe nevir a May'is morowe,
I have a joly wo, a luſty ſorowe.

Creſeidè, whan that ſhe her uncle herde,
With dredeful herte, and deſirous to here
The cauſe of his comming, right thus anſwerde;
Now by your faith, mine uncle (quod ſhe) dere!
What manir windis gidith you now here?
Tell us your joly wo and your penaunce;
How ferforth be ye put in lov'is daunce?
By God (quod he) I hop alwaie behinde,
And ſhe to laugh as though her herte to breſte.
(Quod Pandarus) Loke alwaie that ye finde
Game in mine hode, but herkeneth if you leſt;
Ther is right now come to the toune a geſt,
A Greke eſpie, and tellith newè thinges,
For whiche I come to tell you newe tidinges.
Into the gardin go we', and ye ſhal here
Al privily of this a long ſermoun.
With that thei wentin arme in arme ifere
Into the gardin fro the chambre doun;
And what that he ſo ferre was that the ſoun
Of that which he ſpake no man herin might
He ſaid her thus, and out the lettir plight:
Lo! he that is al wholly your'is fre
Him recommaundith lowly to your grace,
And ſent to you this letter here by me;
Avifith you on it whan ye han ſpace,
And of ſome godely anſwere you purchace,
Or helpe me God ſo, plainely for to ſaine,
He maie not longè livin for his paine.

Ful dredefully tho gan ſhe ſtondin ſtil,
And toke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to chaungin, and ſaid, Scripe nor bil,
For love of God, that touchith ſuch matere,
Ne bring me none; and alſo, uncle dere!
To mine eſtate have more regarde I pray
Than to his luſt: what ſhouldin I more ſay?
And lokith now if this be reſo'nable,
And lettith not for favour ne for ſlouthe;
To ſaine a ſothe, now is it covenable
To mine eſtate, by God and by my trouthe,
To take it, or to havin of him routhe
In harming of my ſelfe or in repreve?
Beare it ayen for him that ye on leve.
This Pandarus gan on her for to ſtare,
And ſayid, Now is this the gretiſt wonder
That evir I ſawe; let be this nice fare:
To dethè mote I ſmittin be with thonder
Yf for the cite whiche that ſtondith yonder
Would I a lettir to you bring or take
To harme of you: what liſt you thus it make?
But thus ye farin well nigh all and ſome,
That he that moſt deſirith you to ſerve
Of him ye retchin leſt where he become,
And whethir that he live or ellis ſterve;
But for al that, that er I maie deſerve
Refuſe it not, (quod he) and hente her faſt,
And in her boſome doune the lettir thraſt,

And ſaid her, Now caſt it awaie anon
That folke maie ſene and gaurin on us twey.
(Quod ſhe) I can abide till thei be gon;
And gan to ſmile, and ſaid him, Eme, I pray
Suche anſwere as you liſt your ſelfe purvey,
For truily I wol no lettir write.
No, than wol I, (quod he) ſo ye endite.

Therwith ſhe lough, and ſayid, Go we dine;
And he gan at himſelfe to japin faſte,
And ſayid, Nece, I have ſo gret a pine
For love, that everiche othir daie I faſte;
And gan his beſte japis forth to caſte,
And made her ſo to laugh at his folie
That ſhe for laughtir wenid for to die.

And whan that ſhe was comen' into the hall
Now eme, (quod ſhe) we wol go dine anon;
And gan ſome of her women to her call,
And ſtreight into her chambre gan ſhe gone;
But of her beſineſſis this was one
Amongis othir thingis, out of drede
Ful privily this lettir for to rede.

Aviſid word by word in every line,
And founde no lacke; ſhe thought he conde his gode,
And put it up, and went her in to dine;
And Pandarus, that in a ſtudie ſtode,
Er he was ware ſhe toke him by the hode,
And ſayid, Ye were caught er that ye wiſte.
I vouchſafe, (quod he) do whatere you liſte.

Tho wiſhin thei, and ſet 'hem doune and ete;
And aſtir none ful ſlighly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the windowe nie the ſtrete,
And ſayid, Nece, who hath arayid thus
The yondir houſe that ſtante aforyene us?
Which houſe? (quod ſhe) and gan for to beholde,
And knewe it wel, and whoſe it was him tolde: 1190
And fellin forthe in ſpeche of thingis ſmale,
And ſatin in the windowe bothè twey.
Whan Pandarus ſawe time unto his tale,
And ſawe well that her folke wer al awey,
Now, necè mine, tel on (quod he) I prey;
How likith you the lettre that ye wot?
Can he theron? for by my trouth I n'ot. 1197
Therwith al roſy hewid tho woxe ſhe,
And gan to hum, and ſayid, So I trowe.
Aquite him wel for Godd'is love (quod he)
My ſelfe tomedis woll the lettre ſowe,
And helde his hondis up, and fell on knowe.
Nowe godè nece, be it nevir ſo lite,
Yeve me the labour it to ſowe and plite. 1204
Ye, for I can ſo writin (quod ſhe) tho,
And eke I n'ot what I ſhould to him ſay.
Naie, nece, quod Pandarus, ſaie you not ſo,
Yet at the left ythonkith him I pray
Of his gode will. O doth him not to dey!
Now for the love of me, my nece dere!
Refuſith not at this time my praiere. 1211

Depardieux! (quod ſhe) God leve al be wele;
God helpe me ſo this is the firſt lettre
That er I wrote, ye al or any dele:
And into' a cloſet for to' aviſe her bettre
She went alone, and gan her herte unfettre
Out of Diſdain'is priſon but a lite,
And ſet her doun and gan a lettre write,
Of whiche to tel in ſhorte is mine entent
Th' effecte as ferre as I can undirſtonde:
She thonkid him of al that he wel ment
Towardis her, but holdin him in honde
She n'olde not, ne makin her ſelvin bonde
In love, but as his ſuſtir him to pleſe
She would aie faine to done his hert an eſe.
She ſhette it, and to Pandare in gan gon
There as he ſat and lokid into ſtrete,
And doun ſhe ſet her by him on a ſtone
Of jaſpre', upon a quiſhen of golde ibete,
And ſaid, As wiſely helpe me God the grete
I nevir did a thing with morè paine
Than write this, to the which ye me conſtraine.
And toke it him: he thonkid her, and ſeide,
God wot of thing ful oftin lothe begonne
Comith ende gode: and, necè mine Creſeide,
That ye to him of harde now ben iwonne
Ought he be glad, by God and yondir ſonne;
For why? men ſaine *Impreſſionis light*
Full lightly ben aie redy to the flight.

But ye han plaied the tiraunt al to longe,
And harde was it your hertè for to grave;
Now ſtinte, that ye no lengir on it honge,
Al woldin ye the forme of daungir ſave,
But haſtith you to done him joye to have,
For truſtith wel, *To long idone hardneſſe*
Cauſith diſpite ful oftin for diſtreſſe. 1246

And right as thei declarid this matere
Lo! Troilus right at the ſtret'is ende
Came riding with his tenthè ſomme ifere
Al ſoftily, and thidirwarde gan bende
There as they ſate, as was his waie to wende
To paleis warde, and Pandare him aſpide,
And ſaid, Nece, ife who comith here ride! 1253

O flie not in! he ſethe us I ſuppoſe,
Leſt he may thinkin that ye him eſchue.
Nay, nay, (quod ſhe) and woxe as redde as roſe:
With that he gan her humbly to ſalue
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewis mue,
And up his loke debonairly he caſt,
And beckid on Pandare and forth by paſt. 1260

God wot if he ſat on his horſe aright,
Or godely was beſene that ilkè day;
God wot where he were like a manly knight;
What ſhould I dretche, or tel of his aray?
Creſeidè, which that al theſe thingis ſey,
To tell in ſhorte, her likid al ifere,
His perſon, his aray, his loke, his chere, 1267

His godely manir and his gentilneſſe,
So well, that never ſithe that ſhe was borne
Ne haddin ſhe ſuche routhe of his diſtreſſe;
And howe ſo ſhe hath hard ben here beforne
To God hope I ſhe hath now caught a thorne,
She ſhal nat pul it out this nexte wike;
God ſende her mo ſuch thornis on to pike!
Pandarus, whiche that ſtode her faſte by,
Felte iron hotte, and he began to ſmite,
And ſeide, Nece, I praye you hertilie
Tel me that I ſhal aſkin you alite;
A woman that were of his deth to wite,
Withouten' his gilt, but for her lacke of routh,
Were it wel done? (quod ſhe) Naie, by my trouth.
God helpe me ſo, (quod he) ye ſay me ſothe,
Ye felin wel your ſelfe that I nought lie.
Lo! yonde he rideth, (quod ſhe) ye, ſo he dothe.
Wel, quod Pandare, as I have tolde you thrie,
Let be your nicete and your folie,
And ſpeke with him in eſing of his herte:
Let nicete nat do you bothe ſmerte.
But theron was to hevin and to done,
Conſidiring al thing it maie nat be,
And why? for ſhame: and it were eke to ſone
To graunt in him ſo gret a liberte,
For plainly her entent (as ſayid ſhe)
Was for to love him unwiſt if ſhe might,
And guerdon him with nothing but with ſight.

But Pandarus thought it shal nat be so;
If that I maie this nice opinion
Shal nat ben holdin fully yeris two;
What should I make of this a longe sermon?
He must assent on that conclusion
As for the time, and whan that it was eve,
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leve.
And on his way full fast homewarde he spedde,
And right for joy he felte his hert to daunce,
And Troilus he founde alone abedde,
That laie as done these lovirs, in a traunce,
Betwixin hope and derke disesperaunce;
But Pandarus right at his in comming
He song, as who saith, Lo! somwhat I bring;
And saidè, Who is in his bedde so sone
Yburied thus? It am I, frende, (quod he.)
Who? Troilus! naie, helpe me so the mone,
(Quod Pandarus.) Thou shalt up rise and se
A charme that was ysent right now to the,
The whiche can helin the of thine axesse,
If thou do forthwith all thy besinesse.
Ye, through the might of God (quod Troilus.)
And Pandarus gan him the lettir take,
And saide, Parde God hath yholpin us:
Have here a light, and loke on all these blake.
But oftin gan the hert to glad and quake
Of Troilus while he it gan to rede
So as the wordis yave him hope or drede.

But, finally, he toke al for the beſte
That ſhe him wrote, for ſomwhat he beheldè
On which he thought he might his hertè reſt,
Al covired ſhe the wordis undir ſhelde;
Thus to the more worthy part he him helde,
That what for hope and Pandarus beheſte
His gretè wo foryede he at the leſte.

But as we maie al daie our ſelvin ſe
Through more wode or cole kindlith the more fire,
Right ſo encreſe of hope, of what it be,
Therwith ful oft encreſith eke deſire,
Or as an okę cometh of a litil ſpire,
So through this lettir which that ſhe him ſent
Encreſin gan deſire, of whiche he brent.

Wherfore I ſay alway that day and night
This Troilus gan to deſirin more
Then he did erſt through hope, and did his might
To preſin on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writin to her of his ſorowes ſore
Fro day to day: he let it nought refreide
That by Pandare he ſomwhat wrot or ſeide;

And did alſo his othir obſervaunces
That till a lovir longith in this caas,
And aftir that his dice turnid on chaunces
So was he eithir glad, or ſaide Alas!
And held aftir his geſtis aie his paas,
And aftir ſuche anſweris as he hadde
So werin his daies fory othir gladde.

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
And pitouſly gan aie to him to plaine,
And him beſought of rede and ſome ſocours;
And Pandarus, that ſawe his wodè paine,
Wext wel nigh ded for routh, ſothe for to ſaine,
And beſely with al his hert gan caſte
Some of his wo to ſleen, and that as faſte;
And ſaidè, Lorde, and frende, and brothir dere!
God wot that thy diſeſe ydothe me wo,
But wolt thou ſtintin al this woful chere,
And by my trouth er it be dayis two,
And God toforne, yet ſhal I ſhape it ſo
That thou ſhalt come into a certaine place
There as thou maieſt thy ſelfe praien her of grace.
And certainly I n'ot if thou it woſte,
But thei that ben experte in love it ſay,
It is one of theſe thingis fortherith moſt
A man to have a leiſir for to praie,
And ſikir place his wo for to bewraie,
For in gode hert it mote ſome routh impreſſe
To here and ſe the giltleſſe in diſtreſſe.
Par'aventure thinkiſt thou though it be ſo
That Kinde would her ydone for to beginne
To have a manir routh upon my wo,
Saith Daungir Nay, thou ſhalt me nevir win;
So rulith ſhe her hert'is goſte within
That though ſhe bendin yet ſhe ſtonte on rote;
What in effect is this unto my bote?

Thinke here ayen whan that the ſturdy oke,
On whiche men hackith oftin for the nones,
Receviđ hath the happy falling ſtroke,
The grete ſweight makith it fall all at ones,
As done theſe grete rockis or theſe milneſtones,
For ſwiftir courſe cometh thing that is of wight,
Whan it diſcendith, than done thingis light.
But rede that bowith doune for every blaſt
Ful lightly ceſſith winde it wol ariſe,
But ſo n'il not an oke whan it is caſt,
It nedith me nought longe the for to' viſe;
Men ſhal rejoyſin of a grete empriſe
Atchevid wel, and ſtont withoutin dout,
Al have men ben the lengir there about.
But, Troilus, now tel me if the leſt
A thing whiche that I ſhal aſkin of the;
Whiche is thy brothir that thou loviſt beſt
As in thy very hert'is privite?
Iwis my brothir Deiphobus, (quod he.)
Now, (quod Pandare) er hour'is twiſe twelve
He ſhal the eſe unwiſt of it himſelve.
Now let me' alone, and workin as I may,
(Quod he) and to Deiphobus went he tho,
Which had his lord and gretè frend ben aie;
Save Troilus no man he lovid ſo:
To tel in ſhorte, withoutin wordis mo,
(Quod Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Frende to a cauſe whiche that ytouchith me.

Yes, parde, (quod Deiphobus) wel thou woſt
Al that evir I may, and God tofore,
Al n'ere it but for the man I love moſt,
My brothir Troilus; but ſay wherfore
It is, for ſithe the day that I was bore
I n'as, ne nevir more to ben I thinke,
Ayenſt a thing that mightin the forthinke.
Pandarus gan him thanke, and to him ſeide,
Lo! Sir, I have a lady in this toune
That is my nece, and callid is Creſeide,
To whiche ſome men would done oppreſſioun,
And wrongfully have her poſſeſſioun,
Wherfore I of your lordſhip you beſeche
To ben our frende withoutin morè ſpeche.
Deiphobus him anſwerde, O! is nat this
That thou ſpekiſt of to me thus ſtraungely
Creſeide, my frende? Pandarus ſaid him Yes.
Than nedith (quod Deiphobus) hardily
No more of this, for truſtith wel that I
Wol be her champion with ſpere and yerde;
I ne rought nat though all her foes it herde.
But telle me, thou that woſt all this matere,
How might I beſt availin now? let ſe.
(Quod Pandarus) If ye, my lorde ſo dere,
Woldin as now do this honour to me
To prayin her to morowe, lo, that ſhe
Came unto you her plaintis to deviſe
Her adverſaries would of it agriſe.

And if I more durſt prayin you as now,
And chargin you to have ſo grete travaile,
To have ſome of your brethrin here with you,
That mightin to her cauſe bettir availe;
Than wote I wel ſhe mightin nevir faile
For to ben holpin, what at your inſtaunce,
What with her othir frendis govirnaunce. 1442

Deiphobus, whiche that comin was of kinde
To al honour and bounte to conſente,
Anſwerde, It ſhal he done; and I can finde
Yet greater helpe to this in mine entente:
What woldeſt thou ſaine if for Helen I ſent
To ſpeke of this? I trowe it be the beſt,
For ſhe may ledin Paris as her leſt. 1449

Of Hector, which that is my lord my brother,
It nedith nat to praien him frende to be,
For I have herde him, o time and eke other,
Spekin of Creſeide ſuche honour that he
Maie ſaine no bet: ſuch hap to him hath ſhe
It nedith nat his helpis more to crave;
He ſhal be ſuche right as we wol him have. 1456

Speke thou thy ſelfe alſo to Troilus
On my behalfe, and praie him with us dine.
Sir, al this ſhal be done, (quod Pandarus)
And toke his leve, and nevir gan to fine,
But to his nec'is houſe as ſtreight as line
He came, and found her fro the mete ariſe,
And ſet him doun, and ſpake right in this wiſe: 1463

He ſaide, O very God ſo have I ronne,
Lo! necè mine, ſe ye nat how I ſwete?
I n'ot whethir ye the more thanke me conne:
Be ye not ware how that falſe Poliphete
Is now about eſtſonis for to plete,
And bringin on you advocacies newe?
I? no, (quod ſhe) and chaungid al her hewe.
What! is he more about me for to dretche,
And done? me wrong? what ſhal I don? alas!
Yet of him ſelfin nothing would I retche,
N'ere it for Antenor and Æneas,
That ben his frendis in ſuche manir caas;
But for the love of God, mine uncle dere!
No force of that, let him have al iſere,
Withoutin that I have inough for us.
Nay, (quod Pandare) it ſhal nothing be ſo,
For I have ben right now at Deiphobus,
At Hector, and mine othir lordis mo,
And ſhortly makid eche of 'hem his fo,
That by my thriſte he ſhal it nevir winne
For aught he can, whan ſo that he beginne.
And as thei caſtin what was beſt to done
Deiphobus, of his owne curtiſie,
Came her to praye in his propir perſone
To holde him on the morowe companie
At dinir, whiche ſhe ne wolde not denie,
But godely gan to his prayere obeye:
He thonkid her, and went upon his wey.

Whan this was don this Pandarus anone,
(To tellin in ſhorte) forth he gan to wende
To Troilus as ſtil as any ſtone,
And al this thing he tolde him orde and ende,
And how that he Deiphobus gan to blende,
And ſaide him, Now is time of that ye conne
To bere the belle to morow', and all is wonne.
Now ſpeke, now pray, now pitouſly complaine,
Let nat for nicè ſhame, for drede or ſlouth;
Somtime a man mote tel his ownè paine;
Beleve it, and ſhe wol have on the routh;
Thou ſhalt ben ſavid by thy faith and trouth:
But wel wot I thou now art in a drede,
And what it is I lay I can arede:
Thou thinkiſt now how ſhould I don al this,
For by my cheris moſtin folke eſpie
That for her love is that I fare amis,
Yet had I levre' unwiſt for ſorow die:
Nowe thinke nat ſo, for thou doſt gret folie,
For I right now have foundin a manere
Of fleight for to coverin al thy chere.
Thou ſhalt gon ovirnight, and that as blive,
Unto Deiphobus houſe as the to plaie,
Thy malady awaie the bette to drive;
For why? thou ſemiſt ſike, the ſothe to ſaie;
Sone after that doune in thy bedde the laie,
And ſaie thou maiſt no lengir up endure,
And lie right there and bide thine avinture.

Say that the ſevir is wont the to take
The ſamè time, and laſtin til a morowe;
And let ſe now how well thou canſt it make,
For parde ſike is he that is in ſorowe:
Go now, farwel, and Venus here to borowe
I hope and thou this purpoſe holdè ferme
Thy grace ſhe ſhal the fully there conferme.
(Quod Troilus) Iwis thou alle nedeleſſe
Counſailiſt me that ſikeliche I me faine,
For I am ſike in erneſt doutèleſſe,
So that wel nigh I ſtervin for the paine.
(Quod Pandarus) Thou ſhalt the bettir plaine,
And haſt the leſſe nede for to counterfete,
For *Him men demin hote that men ſe ſwete.*
Lo! holde the at thy triſtè cloſe, and I
Shal wel the deere unto thy bowe ydrive:
Therwith he toke his leve all ſoftily,
And Troilus to his paleis went blive,
So glad ne was he ner in al his live,
And to Pandarus rede gan al aſſent,
And to Deiphobus houſe at night he went.
What nedith it to tellin al the chere
That Deiphobus unto his brothir made,
Or his axis, or his ſikeliche manere
How men gon him with clothis for to lade
When he was laid, and how men would him glade?
But all for nought; he helde forth aie the wiſe
That ye han herde Pandare er this deviſe.

But certaine is er Troilus him leide
Deiphobus had praied him ovirnight
To ben a frende and helping to Creſeide;
God wot that he that grauntid anon right
To ben her fullè frend with al his might:
But ſuch a nede was it to praien him thenne
As for to biddin a wode man to renne.

The morow came, and nighin gan the time
Of mealtide, whan that the faire Quene Helen
Shope her to ben an hour aftir the prime
With Deiphobus, to whom ſhe n'olde faine,
But as his ſuſtir homely, ſothe to ſaine,
She came to dinir in her plaine entent,
But God and Pandare wiſt al what this ment.

Came eke Creſeide all innocent of this,
Antigone her nece and Tarbe' alſo:
But flie we now prolixite beſt is,
For love of God, and let us faſt ygo
Right to the' effecte withoutin talis mo,
Why al this folke aſſemblid in this place,
And let us of ther ſaluingis pace.

Gret honour did 'hem Deiphobus certaine,
And fedde 'hem wel with al that might 'hem like,
But evirmo, alas! was his refraine,
My godè brothir, Troilus the ſike,
Lithe yet; and therwithal he gan to ſike,
And aftir that he painid him to glade
'Hem as he might, and cherè gode he made.

Complaimid eke Helen of his ſikeneſſe
So faithfully, that pity was to here,
And every wight gan wexin for axes
A leche anon, and ſaide, In this manere
Men curin ſolke, this charme I wol the lere:
But there ſate one, al liſt her nat to teche,
That thought, yet beſt couldin I ben his leche. 1582

Aftir complaint him gonnin thei to preiſe,
As folke don yet whan ſome wight hath begon
To preiſe a man, and up with preiſe him reiſe
A thouſande folde yet higher than the ſon;
He is, he can, that fewe othir lordes kon;
And Pandarus of that thei would afferme
He nought forgate ther praiſing to conferme. 1589

Herde al this thing ſeire Creſeide wel inough,
And every worde gan for to notifie,
For whiche with ſobre chere her hertè lough,
For who is that ne would her glorifie
To mowin ſuche a knight done live or die?
But al paſſe I, leſt ye to longe ydwell;
But for o fine is al that er I tell. 1596

The timè came fro dinir for to riſe,
And as'hem ought ariſin everichone,
And gone a while of this and that deviſe;
But Pandarus brake al this ſpeche anon,
And ſaid to Deiphobus, Wol ye gon,
If it your will be, as I erſt you prayde,
To ſpekin of the nedis of Creſeide? 1603

Helen, which that by the hondè her helde,
Toke firſt the tale, and ſaidè, Go we blive;
And godely on Creſeidè ſhe beheldè,
And ſayid, Jovis, let him nevir thrivè
That doth you harm, and reve him ſone of live,
And yeve me ſorowe but he ſhal it rue
If that I may, and allè folke be true.

Tel thou thy nec'is caſe, (quod Deiphobus
To Pandarus) for thou canſt beſt it tell.
My Lordis and my, Ladies, it ſtant thus;
What ſhould I lengir (quod he) do you dwell?
He ronge 'hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight was Polyphete,
So heinous that men mightin on it ſpete.

Anſwerde of this eche worſe of 'hem than other,
And Poliphete thei gonnin thus to warien,
An hongid be ſuche one were he my brother,
And ſo he ſhal, for it ne maie nought varien:
What ſhould I lengir in this talè tarien?
Plainiliche al at onis thei her highten
To ben her frende in all that er thei mighten.

Spake than Helen, and ſaid to Pandarus,
Wot aught my lord my brothir of this matere,
I mene Hector, or wote it Troilus?
He ſaid her Ye; but wol ye me now here?
Me thinketh thus, ſith that Troilus is here
It were gode if that ye wouldin aſſent
She tolde him her ſelſe al this er ſhe went;

For he wol have the more her greſe at herte,
Bicauſe lo, ſhe a worthie lady is,
And by your wil I wol but in right ſterte,
And do you wete, and that anon iwis,
If that he ſlepe or wol aught here of this:
And in he lept, and ſaid him in his ere,
God have thy ſoule! for brought have I thy bere. 1638

To ſmilin of this gan tho Troilus;
And Pandarus withoutin rekining
Out went to Helen and Deiphobus,
And ſaid 'hem, So there be no tarying,
Ne morè preſe, he wol well that ye bring
Creſeide my lady that is now here,
And as he maie enduren he wol her here. 1645

But wel ye wote the chambre is but lite,
And fewè folke may lightly make it warme;
Now lokith ye, for I wol have no wite.
To bring in preſe that might I ydon him harme,
Or him diſeſin for my bettir arme;
Wher' it be bet ſhe abide till eſtſonis
Now lokith ye, that knowin what to don is. 1652

I ſay for me beſt is, as I can knowe,
That no wight in ne wendè but ye twey,
But it were I, for I can in a throwe
Reherſe her caſe unlike that ſhe can ſey,
And aſtir this ſhe may onis him prey
To ben gode lorde in ſhort, and take her leve;
This may not mokill of his eſe him reve. 1659

And eke for she is straunge he woll forbere
His ese, whiche that him darin nat for you;
Eke othir thing that touchith nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it wel right now,
That secrete is, and for the town is prow:
And thei, that knew nothing of his entente,
Without more to Troilus in thei wente.

Heleine in all her godely softly wise
Gan him salue and womanly to plaie,
And saied, Iwis ye mote algate arise;
Now, faire brothir, be all whole I praie;
And her arme right ovre' his shuldir laie,
And him with all her wit to recomfort;
As she best could she gan him to disport.

So after this (quod she) We you beseke,
My dere brothir! Deiphobus and I,
For love of God, and so doeth Pandare eke,
To ben gode lorde and frende right hertily
Unto Creseide, whiche that certainly
Recevid wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare.

This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile,
And all her case reherce, and that anone:
Whan it was saied, sone astir in a while
(Quod Troilus) As sone as I maie gone
I woll right fain with all my might ben one,
Have God my trouth, her cause for to susteine:
Nowgood thrift have ye (quod Helen the Quene.)

(Quod Pandarus) And it your will ybe
That ſhe maie take her leve er that ſhe go.
O, ellis God forbid it! (tho quod he)
If that ſhe vouchſafin for to doe ſo.
And with that worde (quod Troilus) Ye two,
Deiphobus and my ſuſtir leſe and dere,
To you have I to ſpeke of a matere,
To ben avisid by your rede the better;
And found (as hap was) at his bedd'is hedde
The copie of a tretiſe and a letter
That Hector had him ſent to aſkin redde
If ſoche a man was worthy to ben dedde?
Wote I naught who, but in a griſly wiſe
He prayid 'hem anone on it aviſe.

Deiphobus gan this letter for to' unfolde
In erneſt grete, ſo did Helen the Quene,
And roming outwarde faſt it gonne beholde,
Dounward a ſteire, into an herber grene;
This ilkè thing thei reddin 'hem betwene,
And largily the mountenaunce of an houre
Thei gonne on it to redin and to poure.

Now let 'hem rede, and tournè we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full faſtè prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the grete chambir, and that in hie,
And ſayid, God ſave all this companie!
Come, necè mine, my ladie Quene Helen,
Abidith you, and eke my lordis twene.

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardily;
The lasse presse the better: come forth with me,
And lokith that ye thonkin humbily
Them all thre, and whan ye male godily
Your time isee takith of hem your leve,
Lest we to long his restis him bireve.

All innocent of Pandarus entent
Quod tho Creseide, Go we, unele dere!
And arme in arme inward with him she went,
Avising well her wordis and her chere;
And Pandarus in ernestfull manere
Sayid, All folke, for Godd's love I praie,
Stinith right here, and softily you plaie!

Avisith you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amende!
And inward thus full softily begin;
Nece, I conjure and highly you defende,
On his behalfe whiche that soule us all sende,
And in the vertue of corounis twaine,
Sle a mat this man that hath for you this paine.

Fie on the devill! thinke whiche one he is,
And in what plite he lieth; come of anone;
Thinke all forthe taried tide but lost it n'is,
That woll ye bothe faine whan ye ben one;
And secondly, there yet devinith none
Upon you two: come of now if ye comne
While folke is blent, lo! all the time is wonne.

In titiring, and purſute, and delaies,
The folke devine at wegging of a ſtre,
And though ye would han aftir merie daies
Than dare ye nat; and why? for ſhe and ſhe
Spake ſoche a worde; thus lokid he and he:
Leſt time be loſte I dare nat with you dele,
Come of therfore, and bringith him to hele.

But now to you, ye lovirs that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort,
That laie and might the whiſpring of hem here,
And thought, o Lorde! right now rennith my ſort
Fully to die or have anone comfort,
And was the firſt time that he ſhould her praie
Of love; o mightie God! what ſhall he ſaie?

Explicit liber ſecundus.

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From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Jan. 4. 1783.

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